

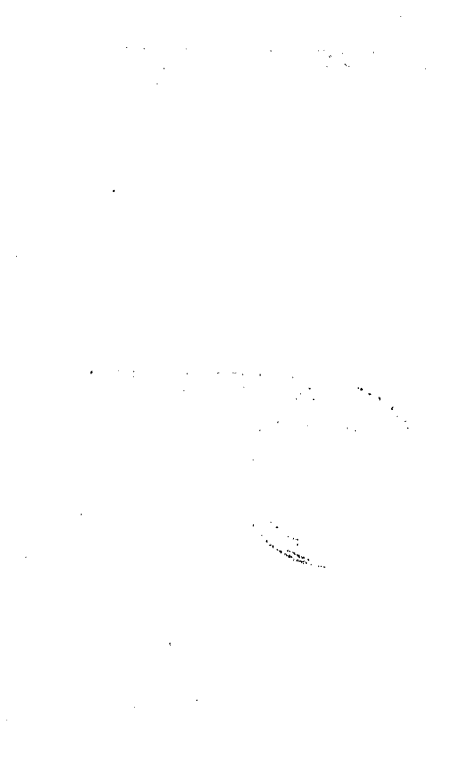
*Ancient Classics for English Readers*

EDITED BY THE

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BEYANGAR COLLECTION

HESIOD, AND THEOGNIS



# HESIOD, AND THEOGNIS

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## PREFACE.

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THE life of Hesiod, remote from towns, and far away up the gulf of time, and his poetry devoid of sensation and excitement in its almost impersonal didacticism, place the writer who deals with them at a disadvantage, as compared with one whose theme is an ancient epic, or a Greek or Roman historian. He lacks, in a great measure, the choice of parallels by aid of which he may abridge the distance between the shadowy past and the living present. He cannot easily persuade himself or his readers to realise, in the inspired rustic of Ascra, "a heart once pregnant with celestial fire," when he reflects how foreign to the wildest dreams of an English ploughman would be the reduction to verse of his rural experiences, or, still more, of his notions about the divine governance of the universe. Yet this is not an excuse for overlooking the past. To enter the poetry of Homer, the poet

nearest to him in claims of antiquity, even if we grant that his style is less interesting, and his matter not so attractive. Indeed one argument for including Hesiod in the series of 'Ancient Classics for Schools' may be found in the fact that nine out of twelve students finish their classical course with but the vaguest acquaintance with his remains. Such, therefore, ought to be as thankful as the unlearned for an idea of what he actually or probably wrote. And it is this which the larger portion of this volume endeavours to supply. The poet's life has been compiled from ancient and modern biographies with a constant eye to the internal evidence of his extant poetry, for which the editions of Paley, Goettling, and Dubner, have been chiefly studied. For illustrative quotation, use has been chiefly made of the English versions of Elton, good for the most part, and, as regards the *Theogony*, almost Miltonic. For the 'Works and Days,' the little-known version of the Elizabethan George Chapman—published by your humble servant by Mr Hooper's edition in J. R. Smith's Library of Old Authors—has been here and there pressed into our service. A parallel or two to Hesiod's 'Shield of Hercules,' from Homer's *Shield of Achilles*, belong to an unpublished version by Mr John Gifford. But to no student of Hesiod are so many thanks due as to Mr F. A. Paley, whose notes have been of the utmost use, as the most successful attempt to render his

of the Homeric epics, there can be none as to the high value of his edition of Hesiod, which may rank with his *Æschylus*, *Euripides*, and *Propertius*.

For the three chapters about *Theognis*, which complete this volume, the translation and arrangement of Mr John Hookham Frere have been adopted. In some instances, where Gaisford's text seemed to discourage freedom of paraphrase, the editor has fallen back upon his own more literal versions. On the whole, however, the debt of the editor to Mr Hookham Frere, for acting as his exponent to *Theognis*, cannot be over-estimated; and we tender our thanks to his literary executors for permission to avail ourselves of his acute and lively versions. These are marked F. Those of Elton and Chapman in *Hesiod* are designated by the letters E and C respectively, and the editor's alternative versions by the letter D affixed to them.





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# HESIOD.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE LIFE OF HESIOD.

OF materials for a biography of the father of didactic poetry there is, as might be expected, far less scarcity than is felt in the case of the founder of epic. Classed as contemporaries by Herodotus, Homer and Hesiod represent two schools of authorship—the former the objective and impersonal, wherein the mover of the puppets that fill his stage is himself invisible; the latter the subjective and personal, which communicates to reader and listener, through the medium of his verse, the private thoughts and circumstances of the individual author. Homer, behind the scenes, sets the battles of the Iliad in array, or carries the reader with his hero through the voyages and adventures of the Odyssey. Hesiod, with all the consciousness of reality, sets himself in the foreground, and lets us into confidences about his family matters—his hopes and fears, his aims and his struggles, the earnestness of his suc-

cess and the obstacles to it. But notwithstanding the explicitness natural to his school of composition, he has failed to leave any record of the date of his life and poems. For an approximation to this the chief authority is Herodotus, who, in discussing the Hellenic theogonies, gives it as his opinion that "Hesiod and Homer lived not more than four hundred years before" his era, and places, it will be observed, the didactic poet first in order of the two. This would correspond with the testimony of the Parian marble which makes Hesiod Homer's senior by about thirty years; and Ephorus, the historian of the poet's fatherland, maintained, amongst others, that Homer and Hesiod lived at the same time. There was undoubtedly a counter theory, referred to Xenophanes, the Eleatic philosopher, which placed Hesiod later than Homer; but the problem is incapable of decisive solution, and the key to it has to be sought, if anywhere, in the internal evidence of the poems themselves, as to "the state of manners, customs, arts, and political government familiar to the respective authors." Tradition certainly conspires to affix a common date to these pre-eminent stars of Hellenic poetry, by clinging to a fabled contest for the prize of their mutual art; and, so far as it is of any worth, corroborates the consistent belief of the ancients, that Hesiod flourished at least nine centuries before Christ. As to his parentage, although the names of his father and mother have not been preserved, there is internal evidence of the most trustworthy kind. In his 'Works and Days' the poet speaks of his father as having migrated across the Ægean

from Cyme in Æolia, urged by narrowness of means and a desire to better his fortunes by a recurrence to the source of his family's wealth; for he sailed to Bœotia, the mother-country of the Æolian colonies. There he probably gave up his sailing, taking to agriculture instead; and there—unless, as some have surmised without much warranty, his elder son, Hesiod, was born before his migration—he begat two sons, Hesiod, and a younger brother, Perses, whose personality is too abundantly avouched by Hesiod to be any subject of question. Though not himself a bard, the father must have carried to Bœotia lively and heroic traditions, which the heroic age of the Æolic coast of Asia Minor was then establishing a fame; and his own traditions, together with the intercourse between the mother and daughter countries, cannot but have nursed a taste for the muse in Hesiod, which developed itself in a distinct and independent vein, and was neither an offset of the Homeric stock, nor indebted to the Homeric poems for aught beyond the countenance afforded by parity of pursuits. The account given by Hesiod of his father's migration deserves citation, and may be conveniently given in the words of Elton's translation of the 'Works and Days':—

“O witless Perses, thus for honest gain,  
Thus did our mutual father plough the main.  
Erst from Æolian Cyme's distant shore  
I fitted in sable ship his course he bore;  
Through the wide seas his venturous way he took,  
No revenues, nor prosperous ease forsook.

The visitation sent from Heaven to man.  
 In Ascrea's wretched hamlet, at the feet  
 Of Helicon, he fixed his humble seat :  
 Ungenial clime—in wintry cold severe  
 And summer heat, and joyless through the year."

—E. 883-894.

An unpromising field, at first sight, for the growth of  
 poesy; but, if the locality is studied, no unmeet  
 "nurse," in its associations and surroundings, "for a  
 poetic child." Near the base of Helicon, the gentler  
 of the twin mountain-brethren towering above the  
 chain that circles Bœotia, Ascrea was within easy reach  
 of the grotto of the Libethrian nymphs, and almost  
 close to the spring of Aganippe, and the source of the  
 memory-haunted Permessus. The fountain of Hippo-  
 crene was further to the south; but it was near this  
 fountain that the inhabitants of Helicon showed to  
 Pausanias a very ancient copy of the 'Works and  
 Days' of the bard, whose name is inseparably associated  
 with the neighbourhood. Modern travellers describe  
 the locality in glowing colours. "The dales and  
 slopes of Helicon," says the Bishop of Lincoln, in  
 his 'Greece, Pictorial, Descriptive, and Historical,'\*  
 "are clothed with groves of olive, walnut, and almond  
 trees; clusters of ilex and arbutus deck its higher  
 parts, and the numerous rills that gush from the soil, and stream  
 in shining cascades down its declivities into the plain  
 between it and the Copaic Lake. On Helicon," he  
 adds, "according to the ancient belief, no noxious

\* P. 253, 254.

herb was found. Here also the first narcissus bloomed. The ground is luxuriantly decked with flowers, which diffuse a delightful fragrance. It resounds with the industrious murmur of bees, and with the music of pastoral flutes, and the noise of waterfalls." The solution of the apparent discrepancy between the ancient description of Aspera and its climate, and that of the modern traveller, is probably to be found in the leaning of the poet Hesiod's mind towards the land which his father had quitted, and which was then more congenial to the growth of poetry—a leaning which may have been enhanced and intensified by disgust at the injustice done to him, as we shall presently see, by the Boeotian law-tribunals. It is, indeed, conceivable that, at certain seasons, Aspera may have been swept by fierce blasts, and have deserved the character given it in the above verses; but the key to its general depreciation at all seasons is more likely to be hid under strong personal prejudice than found in an actual disparity between the ancient and the modern climate. At any rate, it is manifest, from Hesiod's own showing, that the home of his father's settlement had sufficient inducements for him to make it his own likewise; though from the fact that the people of Orchomenus are so ready to dispute the honour of his birth and residence with Aspera. The latter place, without controversy, is entitled to be the witness of the most momentous incident of his poetic history—to wit, the apparition of the Muses, as he fed his father's flock beside the divine Helicon, when, after one of those night-dances in which

“They went  
 To the mountain, breathing grace  
 Enkindling love, and glance their quivering feet,”—

they accosted the favoured rustic with their heavenly speech, gave him commission to be the bard of didactic, as Homer was of epic, poetry, and in token of such a function invested him with a staff of bay, symbolic of poetry and song. Hesiod's own account of this vision in the opening of his ‘Theogony’ is as follows:—

“They to Hesiod erst  
 Came, whilst his flocks  
 Grazed the green hillside,  
 Their heavenly speech  
 Addressed, the Olympian Muses born from Jove :  
 ‘Night-watching shepherds ! beings of reproach !  
 Ye grosser natures, hear ! We know to speak  
 Full many a fiction false, yet seeming true,  
 Or utter at our will the things of truth.’  
 Then from their hands I took a golden staff of Jove,  
 All eloquent, and gave into mine hand,  
 Wondrous ! a verdant rod, a laurel branch,  
 O’er which I took a voice imbreathed  
 Divine, that I might utter forth in song  
 The future and the past, and all that is to be,  
 The blessed day, and all the things that come,  
 And first and last resound the Muses’ praise.”

—E. 33-48.

The details of this interview, as above recorded, are replete with interest—centred, indeed, in the poet himself, but in some degree also attaching to his reputed works. If the verses are genuine—and that the ancients so accounted them is plain from two allu-



sions of Ovid \*—they show that with a faith quite in line with the poet's own, he took this night-vision for no idle dream-fabric, but a definite call to devote himself to the poetry of truth, and the errand of making song subserve the propagation of religion and moral instruction. The "fictions seeming true"—in other words, the heroic poetry so popular in the land of his father's birth—Hesiod considers himself enjoined to "the things of truth"—which the Muses declare have been hitherto regarded by mortals as not included in their gift of inspiration. He takes their commission to be prophet and poet of this phase of minstrelsy, embracing, it appears, the past and future, and including his theogonic and ethical poetry. And while the language of the Muses thus defines the poet's aim, when awakened from a rude shepherd-life to the devout service of inspired song, it implies, rather than asserts, a censure of the kinds of poetry which admit of an easier and freer range of fancy. For himself, this supernatural interview formed the starting-point of a path clear to be tracked; and that he accepted his commission as Heaven-appointed is seen in the gratitude which, as we learn from his 'Works and Days,' he evinced by dedicating to the maids of Helicon,

"Where first their tuneful inspiration flowed,"

an *eared tripod*, won in a contest of song at funeral games in Euboea. In the same passage (E. 915-922)

\* Fasti, vi. 13; Art of Love, i. 27.

Hesiod testifies to the gravity of his poetic trust by averring that he speaks "the mind of ægis-bearing Jove, whose daughters, the Muses, have taught him the divine song." Pausanias (IX. xxxi. 3) records the existence of this tripod at Helicon in his own day.

But though he took his call as divine, there is no reason to think that Hesiod depended solely on this gift of inspiration for a name and place among poets. His father's antecedents suggest the literary culture which he may well have imbibed from his birthplace in Æolia. His own traditions and surroundings in the mother-country—so near the very Olympus which was the seat of the old Pierian minstrels, whatever it may have been of the fabled gods—so fed by local influences and local cultivation of music and poetry—may have predisposed him to the life and functions of a poet; but there is a distinctly practical tone about all his poetry, which shows that he was indebted to his own pains and thought, his own observation and retentiveness, for the gift which he brought, in his measure, to perfection. A life afield conduced to mould him into the poet of the 'Works and Days,'—a sort of Bœotian 'Shepherd's Calendar,' interwoven with episodes of fable, allegory, and personal history. The nearness of his native hills, as well as the traditions of elder bards, conspired to impel him to the task of shaping a theogony. And both aims are so congenial and compatible, that *prima facie* likelihood will always support the theory of one and the same authorship for both poems against the *separatists*,\* who can no more

\* These two theories will not bear the test of criticism.

brook an individual Hesiod than an individual Homer. But be this as it may, the glimpses which the poet gives of himself, in the more autobiographical of his reputed works, present the picture of a not very locomotive sage, shrewd, practical, and observant within his range of observation, apt to learn, and apt also to teach, storing up life's everyday lessons as they strike him, and drawing for his poetry upon a well-filled bank of homely truth and experience. He gives the distinct idea of one who, having a gift and believing in a commission, sets himself to illustrate his own sentiment, that "in front of excellence the gods have placed exertion;" and whilst in the 'Works and Days' it is obvious that his aim and drift are the improvement of his fellow-men by a true detail of his experiences in practical agriculture, in the 'Theogony' he commands our respect and reverence for the pains and research by which he has worked into a system, and this too for the benefit and instruction of his fellows, the floating legends of the gods and goddesses and their offspring, which till his day must have been a chaotic congeries. On works akin to these two main and extant poems we may conceive him to have spent that part of his mature life which was not given up to husbandry. That he must have disliked—at any rate, if it involved sea-voyages. His lists of rivers in the 'Theogony' are curiously defective where it might have been supposed they would be fullest—as regards the Hellespont; whereas he gives many names of the Iliad and Odyssey were so called, as separating what by the voice of previous tradition had been made one.

of Asiatic rivers, and even mentions the Nile and the Phasis, neither of which occur in Homer. But this would seem to have been a hearsay knowledge of geography, for he distinctly declares his experience of his father's quondam calling to be limited to a single passage to Eubœa from the mainland; and as he is less full when he should enumerate Greek rivers, the reasonable supposition is that he was no traveller, and, depending on tradition, was most correct and communicative touching those streams of which he had heard most in childhood. The one voyage to which he owned was made with a view to the musical contest at Chalcis above alluded to; and it is surely not without a touch of quiet humour that this sailor's son owns himself a landlubber in the following verses addressed to his ne'er-do-well brother:—

“ . . . thought on merchandise be placed,  
 Lest debts ensnare or woeful hunger waste,  
 Learn now . . .  
 Though ships and voyages are strange to me.  
 Ne'er o'er the sea's broad way my course I bore,  
 Save once from Aulis to the Eubœan shore;  
 From Aulis, where the mighty Argive host,  
 . . .  
 From sacred Greece assembled to destroy  
 The guilty walls of luxury-blooming Troy.”

—‘Works and Days,’ E. 901-910.

This, the poet goes on to say, is all he knows practically of the sea; and it is little enough; for it is no exaggeration, but a simple fact, that the strait which constituted the only outlet of a

sea voyage was so great a matter, that a span compared with which the Menai Strait, or the Thames at any of the metropolitan bridges, would be a serious business. Emile Burnouf might literally call the Euripus "le canal Eubéen." In the days of Thucydides a bridge had been thrown across it.

But experimental knowledge was reckoned superfluous by one who could rest in the knowledge he possessed of the mind of Jove, and in the commission he held from his father, *the poet*, according to his belief, taught him navigation, astronomy, and the rest of the curriculum, when they made him an interpreter of the divine will, and a "vates" in a double sense,—to dictate a series of precepts concerning the time for voyaging and the time for staying ashore. Besides, in the poet's eye seafaring was a necessity of degenerate times. In the golden age none were merchants.—('Works and Days,' 236.)

Yet the even flow of the poet's rural life was not without its occasional and chronic disturbances and storms. The younger brother, to whom allusion has been made more than once, and whom he generally addresses as "simple, foolish, good-for-nought Perses," had, it seems, come in for a share of the considerable property which Hesiod's father had got together, after he exchanged navigation and commerce for agricultural pursuits. The settlement of the shares in this inheritance lay with the kings, who in primitive ages exercised in the distribution of property the functions of judges, and, according to Hesiod's account, were not superior to bribery and corruption. Perses found means to

purchase their award to him of the better half of the wealth in luxury and extravagance, a favourite mode of spending his time being that of frequenting the law-tribunals, as nowadays the idletons of a town or district may be known by their lounging about the petty sessional courts when open. Perhaps the taste for litigation thus fostered furnished him with the idea of repairing his diminished fortunes by again proceeding against his brother, and hence Hesiod's invectives against the judges, who were the instruments of his rapacity. It is not distinctly stated what was the issue of this second suit, which aimed at stripping Hesiod of that smaller portion which had already been assigned to him: perhaps it was an open sore, under the influence of which he wrote his 'Works and Days,'—a persuasive to honest labour as contrasted with the idleness which is fertile in expedients for living at the expense of others—a picture from life of the active farmer, and, as a foil to him, of the idle loungeur. Here is a sample of it:—

"Small care be taken of the summer's plenty stored,  
For whose unnumbered hoards the lawless war;  
Who wants within the summer's plenty stored,  
The fruits, and Ceres' yearly hoard:  
With these replenished, at the brawling bar  
To instigate the war:  
But this thou may'st no more; let justice guide,  
Best boon of heaven, and future strife decide.  
Not so we shared the patrimonial land,  
When greedy pillage filled thy grasping hand;

The bitter-herb's juice is, sweetened by thee,  
 The serpent with his fangs has turned to food;  
 O brother! live! live! in a life of peace,  
 Unknown how far the life of peace is worth,  
 Unknown the joys of the land's fulfollows yield,  
 And asphodel, the dainties of the field."

—E. 44-58.

The graphic character of the last four lines must not blind the reader to the fact that they have a personal reference to the poet and his brother, and represent the anxiety of the former that the latter should adopt, though late, his own life-conviction, and act out the truth that a dinner of herbs with a clear conscience is preferable to the luxuries of plenty purchased by fraud. Consistent with this desire is the unselfish tone in which he constantly recurs to the subject throughout the 'Works and Days,' and that not so much as if he sought to work this change in his brother for peace and quietness to himself, as for a real interest in that brother's amendment—we do not learn with what success. Perhaps, as has been surmised, Perses had a wife who kept him up to his extravagant ways, and to the ready means of increasing his family treasure by endeavouring to levy a fresh tax upon Hesiod. Such a surmise might well account for the poet's curious misogynic crotchets. Low as is the value set upon a "help-meet" by Simonides, Archilochus, Bacchylides, and the rest, by Euripides, one might have expected a more sensible woman to be chosen from one who has made a list of the celebrated women of old, than the railing tone which

accompanies his account of the myth of Pandora, the association of woman with unmixed evil in that legend, and the more practical advice to his brother in a later part of his 'Works and Days,' where he bids him shun the wiles of a woman "dressed out behind" (crinolines and dress-improvers being, it would seem, not by any means modern inventions), and unsparingly lashes the whole sex in the style of the verses we quote:—

"Let no fair woman robed in loose array,  
 Tempt thy feet astray;  
 Who soft demands if thine abode be near,  
 And blandly lisps and murmurs in thine ear.  
 For, lo! the thief is ambushed in her smile."

—E. 511-516.

Indeed, it might be maintained, quite consistently with the internal evidence of Hesiod's poems, that he lived and died a bachelor, seeing perhaps the evil influences of a worthless wife on his brother's establishment and character. It is true that in certain passages (E. 511-516) he should have come more close in the text to those above cited, whereas they have got shifted to a later part of the poem, where they are less to the point) he prescribes general directions about taking a wife, in just the matter-of-fact way a man would who wrote without passion and without experience. The bridegroom was to be not far short of thirty, the bride about nineteen. Possibly in the injunction that the latter should be sought in the ranks of maidenhood, lurked the same aversion to "marrying a widow" which animated the worldly-wise father of



Mr Samuel Weller. Anyhow, he would have had the model wife fulfil the requirements of the Latin epitaph on a matron, for he prescribes that she should be "simple-minded" and "home-keeping" (though he says nothing about her being a worker in wools), in lines of which, because Elton's version is here needlessly diffuse, we submit a closer rendering of our own :—

"And choose thy wife from those that round thee dwell,  
Weighing, lest neighbours jeer, thy choice full well.  
Than wife that's good man finds no greater gain,  
But feast-frequenting mates are simply bane.  
Such without fire a stout man's frame consume,  
And to crude old age bring his manhood's bloom."

—'WORKS AND DAYS,' 700-705.

This, we conceive, was Hesiod's advice, as an outsider might give it, to others. For himself, it is probable he reckoned that the establishment would suffice which he elsewhere recommends to the farmer class—an unmarried bailiff, a housekeeper without encumbrances; for a female servant with children, he remarks, in bachelor fashion, is troublesome—and a dog that bites (see 'Works and Days,' 602-604). It is in the perpetuation of this view that tradition, which has built up many absurd figments upon the scant data of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, has signally failed to fasten other offspring to his name than the intellectual creations which have kept it in remembrance. This was surely Plato's belief when he wrote the following beautiful sentences in his *Symposium*?

"Who when he thinks of Homer and Hesiod and other great poets, would not rather have their children than ordinary human ones? Who would not emulate them in the creation of children such as theirs, which have preserved their memory, and given them everlasting fame?"\*

So far as the poet's life and character can be approximately guessed from his poems, it would seem to have been temperately and wisely ordered, placid, and for the most part unemotional. That one who so clearly saw the dangers of association with bad women (the story of his death from a woman of ill repute, good, should have met his death through an intrigue at Cœnoë, in Ozolian Locris, with Clymene, the sister of his hosts, is doubtless just as pure a bit of incoherent fiction as that his remains were carried ashore, from out of the ocean into which they had been cast, by the waves of a deluge; or that a satyr had slain him)—no doubt the sharp-toothed specimen we have seen recommended in the 'Works and Days'—traced out the authors of the murder, and brought them to the hands of justice. Some accounts attribute to the poet only a guilty knowledge of the crime of a fellow-lodger; but in either shape the legend is an after-thought, as is also the halting story that Stesichorus, who lived from B.C. 643 to B.C. 560, was the first to tell of the poet's death. All that can be concluded from trustworthy data for his biography, beyond what has been already noticed, is that in later life he must have exchanged his residence at Ascræ for Orchomenus, possibly to be further from the importunities of

\* Jowett's transl., i. 525.

Perses, and beyond the atmosphere of unrighteous judges. Pausanias states that Hesiod, like Homer, whether from fortune's spite or natural distaste, enjoyed no intimacy with kings or great people; and this coincides with Philo's story that the Spartan Cleomenes used to call Hesiod "the poet of the Helots," in contrast with Homer, "the delight of warriors," and with the inference from an expression in the 'Works and Days' that the poet and his father were only resident aliens in Boeotia. In Thespiæ, to which realm he belonged, agriculture was held degrading to a freeman, which helps to account for his being, in his own day, a poet only of the peasantry and the lower classes. Pausanias and Paterculus do but retail tradition; but this suffices to corroborate the impression, derived from the poet's own works, of a calm and contemplative life, unclouded except by the worthlessness of others, and owing no drawbacks to faults or failings of its own. Musing much on the deities whose histories he systematised as best he might, and at whose fanes, notwithstanding all his research and inquiry, he still ignorantly worshipped; regulating his life on plain and homely moral principles, and ever awake to the voice of mythology, which spoke so stirringly to dwellers in his home of Boeotia. Hesiod lived and died in a land no more divided to him, as surely to the testimony of the epitaph by his countryman Chersias, which Pausanias read on the poet's sepulchre at Orchomenus:—

"Though he the Astræa loved, and the gods of the sky,

Yet rest his bones beneath the Minyan earth,

Equestrian land. There, Hellas, sleeps thy pride,  
The wisest bard of bards in wisdom tried."

—Pausan., ix. 38, § 4.

The question of Hesiod's literary offspring has been much debated, the 'Works and Days' alone enjoying an undisputed genuineness. But it does not seem that the 'Theogony' was impugned before the time of Pausanias,\* who records that Hesiod's Heli-conian fellow-citizens recognised only the 'Works and Days.' On the other hand—to say nothing of internal evidence in the 'Theogony'—we have the testimony of Herodotus to Hesiod's authorship; whilst the ancient popular opinion on this subject finds corroboration in Plato's direct allusion to the existence of the 'Theogony' as Hesiod's recognised work. Alluding to vv. 116-118 of the 'Theogony,' the philosopher writes in the 'Symposium' (178),—"As Hesiod says,—

'First Chaos came, and then broad-bosomed Earth,  
The everlasting seat of all that is,  
And Love.'

In other words, after Chaos, the Earth and Love, these two came into being." Aristophanes, also, in more than one drama, must be considered to refer to the 'Theogony' and the "Works." Furthermore, it is certain that the Alexandrian critics, to whom scepticism in the matter would have opened a congenial field, never so much as hinted a question concerning the age and authorship of the 'Theogony.' Besides these two works, but one other poem has

ix. 31, § 3.

descended to our day under the name of Hesiod, unless, indeed, we take as a sample of his 'Eoiæ, or Catalogue of Heroines,' the fifty-six verses which, having slipped their cable, have got attached to the opening of 'The Shield of Hercules.' The 'Shield' is certainly of questionable merit, but, at least, though a little hesitation would have been wise in Colonel Mure, before expressing such wholesale condemnation and contempt as he heaps upon it.\* These three poems, at all events, are what have come down under the name and style of Hesiod, and are our specimens of the three classes of poetical composition which tradition imputes to him:—(1) didactic; (2) historical and genealogical; (3) short mythical poems. Under one or other of these heads it is easy to group the Hesiodic poems, no longer extant, of which notices are found in ancient authors. Thus the 'Astronomy' and the 'Maxims of Chiron,' with the 'Ornithomanteia, or Book of Augury,' belong to the first class; the 'Eoiæ, or Catalogue of Women,' which is probably the same poem as the 'Genealogy of Heroes;' the 'Melampodia,' which treated of the renowned prophet, prince, and priest of the Argives, Melampus, and of his descendants in genealogical sequence; and the 'Ægimius,' which gathered round the so-named mythical prince of the Dorians, and friend and ally of Hercules, many genealogical traditions of the Heraclid and Dorian races,—will, with the extant 'Theogony,' represent the second; while the smaller epics of 'The Marriage of Ceyx,' 'The Descent to Hades of Theseus,'

\* History of Greek Lit., ii. 424.

and the 'Epithalamium' of Peleus and Thetis,' will keep in countenance the sole extant representative of the third class, and enhance the possibility that 'The Shield of Hercules' is at least *Hesiodic*, though it is safer to put it thus vaguely than to affirm it Hesiod's. A conveniently wide berth is afforded by the modern solution, that several imputed works of Hesiod are the works of a school of authors of which Hesiod was the name-giving patriarch. The truth in this matter can only be approximated. Enough, perhaps, is affirmed when we say that in style, dialect, and flavour of antiquity, the 'Theogony' and the 'Works' are more akin to each other than to the 'Shield;' while, at the same time, the last-named poem is of a more recent age. The two former poems are of the Æolo-Bœotic type of the ancient epic dialect, while the 'Shield' is nearer to the Æolo-Asiatic branch of it, used by Homer. Discrepancies, where they occur, may be set down to the interpolations of rhapsodists, and to the accretions incident to passage through the hands of many different workmen, after the original master. The style and merits of each work will best be discussed separately; and we shall give precedence to Hesiod's most undoubted poem, the 'Works and Days.'

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WORKS AND DAYS.

THE meaning of the title prefixed to Hesiod's great didactic poem appears to be properly "Farming Operations," "Lucky and Unlucky Days," or, in short, "The Husbandman's Calendar;" but if the ethical scope of it be taken into account, it might, as Colonel Mure has remarked, be not inaptly described as "A Letter of Remonstrance and Advice to a Brother." And inasmuch as its object is to exhort that brother to amend his ways, and take to increasing his substance by agriculture, rather than dreaming of schemes to enhance it by frequenting and corrupting the law-courts, the two descriptions are not inconsistent with each other. It has been imputed as blame to the poem that it hangs loosely together, that its connection is loose and vague;—in short, that its constituent parts, larger and smaller, are seldom fitly jointed and compacted. But some allowance is surely to be made for occasional tokens of inefficiency in so early a poet, engaged upon a task where he had neither pattern nor master to refer to; and besides

this, a closer study of the whole will prove that the want of connectedness in the work is more seeming than real. Didactic poetry, from Hesiod's day until the present, has ever claimed the privilege of arranging its hortatory topics pretty much as is most convenient, and of enforcing its chief idea, be that what it may, by arguments and illustrations rather congruous in the main than marshalled in the best order of their going. But the 'Works and Days' is capable of a more regular division and subdivision. The first part (vv. 1-383) is ethical rather than didactic,—a setting forth by contrast, and by the accessory aid of myth, fable, allegory, and personification, of the superiority of honest labour to unworthy and idle life, and of worthy emulation to unworthy strife and envying. The second part (vv. 384-764) consists of practical hints and rules as to husbandry, and in a more direct strain, furnishes advice how best to go about that which was the industrious Boeotian's proper and chief means of subsistence. It thus follows naturally on the general exhortation to honest labour which formed the first part of the poem. The third and last part is a religious calendar of the months, with remarks upon the days most lucky or unpropitious for this or that duty or occupation of rural and nautical life. All three, however, more or less address Perses as "a sort of ideal reader," and thus hang together quite sufficiently for didactic purposes; whilst in each of the two first parts episodic matter helps to relieve the dry routine of exhortation or precept, and is introduced, as we shall endeavour to show, with more skill and sys-



tem than would appear to a perfunctory reader. The first part, as is almost universally agreed by editors and commentators, begins properly at v. 11, which in the Greek reads as if it were a correction of the view held by the author in his 'Theogony,' that the two poems were "The Works of Hesiod" and which is therefore a statement of the unity of authorship for the two poems. The introductory ten verses are in all probability nothing more than a shifting proem, in the shape of an address to Jove and the Muses, available for the use of the Hesiodian rhapsodists, in common with divers other like introductions. According to Pausanias, the Heliconians, who kept their countryman's great work engraved on a leaden tablet, knew nothing of these ten verses. Starting, then, at this point, the poet distinguishes between two goddesses of strife, the one pernicious and discord-sowing, the other provocative of honest enterprise. The elder and nobler of the twain is the parent of healthy competition, and actuates mechanics and artists, as well as bards and beggars, between which last trades it is obvious that the poet traces a not fortuitous connection:—

"Beneficent this better envy burns,—  
Thus emulous his wheel the potter turns,  
The smith his anvil beats, the beggar throng  
Industrious ply, the bards contend in song."

—E. 33-36.

The wandering minstrel and the professional beggar of the heroic age exercise equally legitimate callings in Hesiod's view, and the picture which he draws

recalls to us those of the banquet-hall in the *Odyssey*. When Antinous rates the swine-herd Eumæus for bringing Ulysses disguised as a beggar-man into the hall of feasting, his grievance is that

“Of the tribes  
Of various and many-memedians that prey,  
As kill-joys, at our banquets, we have got  
A concourse ample. Is it nought to thee  
That such as these, here gathering, all the means  
Of thy young men’s devotion?”

—*Odyssey*, xvii. 624-628 (Musgrave).

It is probable that the beggar’s place was nearer the threshold than that of Phemius the bard, who had just before been singing to his harp, or of other inspired minstrels, of whom it is said that

“These o’er all the world  
At all feasts are made welcome.”

—*Odyssey*, xvii. 639-641 (Musgrave).

But that he had an assured footing and dole in such assemblies is plain from Irus’s jealousy of a supposed rival beggar, which results in the boxing-match with Ulysses in the 18th Book.

To return to Hesiod. The bettermost kind of rivalry is the goddess to whom he would have Perses give heed, and not her wrangling sister, who inspires wrongful dealing, chicanery, and roguish shifts, and has no fancy for fair-play or healthy emulation. She, says the poet, has had it too much her own way since Prometheus stole the fire from heaven, because Zeus, as a punishment, made her a goddess, and the idle,

to shirk their inevitable lot, resort to injustice. "If the gods had not ordained toil, men might stow away their belongings over the sea-be, and there would be an end to ploughing with mules and oxen."—

"But Zeus our food concealed : Prometheus' art  
With fraud illusive had incensed his heart ;  
Sore ills to man devised the heavenly sire,  
And hid the shining element of fire.  
Prometheus then, benevolent of soul,  
In hollow reed the spark recovering stole,  
And thus the god beguiled, whose awful gaze  
Serene rejoices in the lightning blaze."

—E. 67-74.

Till the Titan's offence, toil and sickness and human ills had been unknown ; but after that transgression they were introduced—as sin into the world through our mother Eve—by Zeus's "beauteous evil," Pandora. The Father creates her, and the immortals rival each other in the gifts that shall make her best adapted for her work of witchery, and presently send her as a gift to Epimetheus, the personification of "Unreflection," who takes her in spite of the remonstrances of his elder and more foresighted brother, Prometheus. If, as has been suggested, we may take the wise Prometheus to represent the poet, and Perses to be implied in the weaker Epimetheus—and if, too, in Pandora there is a covert allusion to the foolish wife of Perses, who encouraged his extravagance, and seems to have inspired Hesiod with an aversion for her sex—it will bring home the more closely the pertinence of this myth to the moral lesson which, in the first part of

the poem, the poet designed to teach. The character and equipment of Pandora is one of Hesiod's finest flights above a commonly-even level:—

"The Sire who rules the earth and sways the pole  
 He bade the Graces and the Hours to sing;  
 He bade the Muses sing, and all the choir of song,  
 And mould with tempering water plastic clay;  
 With human nerve and human voice invest  
 The lifeless shape, and give the breathing breast;  
 Fair as the virgin's looks, the looks of love.  
 He bade Minerva teach the skill that sheds  
 A thousand colours in the gliding threads;  
 He bade the Graces give the gleaming gown  
 To clothe the limbs, and all the train of art,  
 And cares of dress that prey upon the frame;  
 Bade Hermes last endue with craft refined  
 Of words and guile, and all the wiles of wit."

—E. 83-99.

The Graces almost overdo the bidding of their chief, calling in other helpers besides those named in the above extract:—

"Adored Persuasion and the Graces young,  
 Her tapered limbs with purple flowers;  
 Round her fair brow the roses of the spring  
 A golden garland and a crown of purple flowers."

—E. 103-106.

And when the conclave deemed that they had perfected an impersonation of mischief,—

"The name Pandora to the maid was given,  
 To crown this mischief of the mortal race.

The she ever with the beautiful maid  
 The finished nymph, the inextricable snare;  
 To Epimetheus was the present brought,  
 For he had with him all the world's ill—  
 The fates of the world, and all the world's ill,  
 And she had the world's ill, and all the world's ill,  
 But he received, and conscious knew too late  
 The evil he had done, as he had done it.

—E. 114-124.

How this gift of "woman" was to be the means of prolific evil, as the story, the next, it must be confessed, does not very coherently explain. Nothing is said, in the account of her equipment, of any chest or casket sent with her by Zeus, or any other god, as an apparatus for propagating ill. And when in v. 94 of the poem we are brought face to face with the chest and the lid, and Pandora's fatal curiosity, the puzzle is "how they got there." Homer, indeed, glances at two chests, one of good the other of evil gifts, in Jove's heavenly mansion:—

"Two chests there stand on Zeus's high Olympus,

One laden with all gifts, and one with ill;

To whomso Zeus ordains a mingled share,

Now in due time with foul he meeteth, now with fair."

—Conington, II. xxiv.

And those who hold Hesiod to have drawn on Homer, or to have availed himself here and there of the same pre-existent legends, may infer that the poet leaves it to be surmised that Pandora was furnished with the less desirable casket for the express purpose of woe to man. But it is a more likely solution that Prometheus, the embodiment of mythic philanthropy, had im-

prisoned "human ills" in a chest in the abode of Epimetheus, and this chest was tampered with through the same craving for knowledge which actuated Mother Eve. This account is supported by the authority of Proclus. In Hesiod, the first mention of the chest is simultaneous with the catastrophe—

"The woman's hands, an apple caught fair,  
 Shut the lid—no more ills in air.  
 Hope sole remained within, nor took her flight,  
 Beneath the casket's verge concealed from sight.  
 The unbroken cell with closing lid the maid  
 Sealed, and the earth-assembly's voice obeyed.  
 Issued the rest, in quick dispersion hurled,  
 And woes innumerable roamed the breathing world ;  
 With ills the land is rife, with ills the sea ;  
 For aye lament our frail humanity :  
 Self-wandering through the noon, the night, they glide  
 Voiceless—a voice the Power all-wise denied.  
 Know then this awful truth : it is not given  
 To elude the wisdom of omniscient Heaven."

—E. 131-144.

It is a beautiful commentary on that part of the legend which represents Hope as lying not at the bottom of the casket, but just beneath the lid which in closing shuts her in, that this did not happen through inadvertence on Pandora's part, but with her connivance, and that of her divine prompter, who, though desirous to punish mankind, represents a partial benefactor to the race. The concluding lines of the last extract recall the reader to the drift of the first part of the poem, by repeating that the moral governance of the universe will not suffer wrong to

go unpunished, or allow innocence to succumb to fraud.

And yet, the poet goes on to argue, the times in which he lives are out of joint. Such men as his brother prosper in an age which in wickedness distances its precursors. His lot, he laments, is cast in the fifth age of the world; and here he takes occasion to introduce the episode of the five ages of the world, and of the increase of corruption as each succeeds the other. In this episode, which Mr Paley considers to bear a more than accidental resemblance to the Mosaic writings, the golden age comes first—those happy times under Cronos or Saturn, when there was neither care nor trouble nor labour, but life was a blameless holiday spent in gathering self-sown fruits; and death, unheralded by decay or old age, coming to men even as a sleep, was the very ideal of their life:—

“Strangers to ill, they nature’s banquets proved,  
 Rich in earth’s fruits, and of the blest beloved,  
 They sat in bliss, as plenty did bestow  
 Soft o’er the senses, and withheld the willing soul.  
 Theirs was each good—the grain-exuberant soil  
 Poured its full harvest uncompurged by toil:  
 The virtuous many dwelt in common blest,  
 And all unenvying, and what all in peace possessed.”  
 —E. 155-162.

It was with sin, in Hesiod’s view as in that of the author of the Book of Genesis, that death, deserving the name, came into the world. As for the golden race, when earth in the fulness of time closed upon it, they became demigods or genii, or spirits invisibly

moving over the earth—a race of which Homer, indeed, says nought, but whose functions, shadowed forth in Hesiod, accord pretty much with the account Diotima gives of them in the ‘Banquet of Plato.’\* Here is Hesiod’s account:—

“When on this race the verdant earth had lain,  
By Jove’s high will they rose a ‘genii’ train;  
Earth-angeling then they first began,  
The first of all the powers of air and earth.  
And forth they winged their way,  
O’er earth’s wide space they winged their way,  
Disperse the fertile treasures of the ground,  
And bend their wings to mark the deed unjust,  
To mark the deed unjust, the just approve,  
Their kingly office, delegates of Jove.”

—E. 163-172.

With this dim forecasting by a heathen of the “ministry of angels” may be compared the poet’s reference further on in the poem to the same invisible agency, where he uses the argument of the continual oversight of these thrice ten thousand genii as a dissuasive to corrupt judgments, such as those which the Boeotian king had given in favour of his brother:—

“... Pass t’ the high Olympus, where the gods  
Who govern all the world, the world’s great gods,  
And thou shalt see the delegates of Jove,  
For thrice ten thousand holy dæmons rove  
The nurturing earth, the delegates of Jove;  
Hovering they glide to earth’s extremest bound,  
A cloud aerial veils their forms around—

\* Jowett’s transl., i. 519.



Guardians of the earth, the silver race,  
The upright, the just, the true, the good, the wise."

—E. 331-340.

In the second or silver age began declension and degeneracy. The blessedness of this race consisted in long retention of childhood and its innocence—even up to a hundred years. Married as usual, it became quarrelsome, irreligious, and ungrateful to the gods—its creators. This gave it a fatal end:—

"Jove angry hid them straight in earth,  
Since to the blessed deities of heaven  
They gave not those respects they should have given.  
But when the earth had hid these, like the rest,  
They then were called the subterrestrial blest,  
A happy sort, fit for the infernal  
Fit for the infernal spirits of powerful men."

—C. 135-142.

In Hesiod's account of this race it is curious to note a correspondence with holy Scripture as to the term of life in primitive man; curious, too, that Jove is not said to have created, but to have laid to sleep, the silver race. It obtained from men, after its demise, the same name, "blessed spirits of the departed," and perhaps the "Manes" of the Latin, without, however, attaining to immortality. A rougher type was that of the bronze age, which the Elizabethan translator Chapman seems right in designating as

"O wretched race, the bronze, the iron, the lead."

though another way of translating the words which he

so interprets represents these men of brass as "mighty by reason of their ashen spears." The question is set at rest by the context, in which the arms of this race are actually said to have been of brass. This age was hard and ferocious, and, unlike those preceding it, carnivorous. It perished by mutual slaughter, and found an end most unlike the posthumous honours of the silver race, in an ignominious descent to Hades :—

" Their thoughts were bent on violence alone,  
 Bloody their feasts, by wheaten bread unblest ;  
 And mocks approach with unresisted hands ;  
 In brass—dark iron slept within the mine.  
 They by e. . . .  
 In horrid darkness plunged, the house of hell.  
 Fierce though they were, their mortal course was run,  
 Dashing many a life . . . the sun."  
 —E. 193-204.

At this stage Hesiod suspends awhile the downward course of ages and races, and reflecting that, having commemorated the "genii" on earth and the blessed spirits in Hades, he must not overlook the "heroes," a veneration for whom formed an important part of the religion of Hellenes, brings the "heroes"—apparently unmetallic—into a place to which their prowess entitled them, next to the brazen age ; and at the same time, contrasting their virtues with the character of their violent predecessors, assigns to them an after-

state nearer to that of the gold and silver races. Of their lives and acts Hesiod tells us that—

"The great battle came to their end ;  
Some when the Cadmian realm, where they with savage might  
Strove for the throne of Greece, bore,  
Some war in the great plain of Troy, where they bore,  
O'er the great space of earth and sea they bore,  
For sake of Helen with the golden hair,  
And death for Helen's sake o'erwhelmed them there."

—E. 211-218.

Their rest is in the Isles of the Blest, and in

"A life, a seat, distinct from human kind,  
Beside the deepening whirlpools of the main,  
In those black isles where Cronos holds his reign,  
Apart from heaven's immortals ; calm they share  
A rest unsullied by the clouds of care.  
And yearly, thrice with the seasons of the year,  
Springs, Summer, Autumn, and the Winter year."

—E. 220-226.

Who does not recognise the same regions beyond circling ocean, of which Horace long ago says in his sixteenth Epode,—

"The land is happy there,  
Where Ceres yearly sows her golden seed, and with  
sheaves,  
And the vine with purple clusters the perfume of all  
her leaves.

Nor are the swelling seeds burnt up within the thirsty  
clods,  
So kindly blends the seasons there the king of all the gods.

For Jupiter, when he with brass . . .  
 . . . by the *good* to be enjoyed."

—Theodore Martin, p. 242.

But with this exception and interval, the ages tend to the worse. Now comes the iron age, corrupt, unrestful, and toilsome; wherein, in strong contrast to the silver age, which . . . years of childhood and youth, premature senility is an index of physical degeneracy:—

. . . into the light of day,  
 . . . shows . . .

—E. 237, 238.

With this race, Hesiod goes on to tell us, family ties, the sanctity of oaths, and the plighted faith, are dead letters. . . . Lynch-lawyers get the upper hand. All is "violence, oppression, and sword law," and

"The weight of care bestow,  
 And still some good is mingled with the woe,"

yet, as this iron age, at the transition point of which Hesiod's own lot is cast, shades off into a lower and worse generation, the lowest depth will at length be reached, and baseness, corruption, crooked ways and words, will supplant all nobler impulses,

"From the broad . . . raiment bright,  
 From the broad . . .  
 Called to th' eternal synod of the skies,  
 The virgins, Modesty and Justice, rise,  
 And leave forsaken man to mourn below  
 The woe of evil and the cureless woe."

—E. 259-264.

Having thus finished his allegory of the five ages, and identified his own generation with the last and worst, it is nowise abrupt or unseasonable in the poet to bring home to the kings and judges of Bœotia their share in the blame of things being as they are, by means of an apologue or fable. Some have said that it ought to be entitled "The Hawk and the Dove," but Hesiod probably had in his mind the legend of Tereus and Philomela; and the allusion to the nightingale in v. 268 probably refers to the tincture of green on its dark-coloured throat, with which one of our older ornithologists credits that bird. The fable is as follows, and it represents oppression and violence in their naked repulsiveness. Contrary to the use of later fabulists, the moral is put in the mouth of the hawk, not of the narrator:—

"A hawk, as I have said, was taken in the vale  
Bore in his pounce a neck-stroked nightingale;  
And, ere he loosed her, thus he said beneath the stroke  
"Wretch, why these screams? a stronger holds thee now;  
Where'er I shape my course a captive thou,  
Maugre thy song, must serve my country;  
I rend my banquet from the throat of every;  
Senseless is he who dares with power contend;  
Defeat, rebuke, despair shall be his end."

—E. 267-276.

From fable the poet passes at once to a more direct appeal. Addressing Perses and the judges, he points out that injustice and oppression cannot only crush the poor man, but eventually the rich and powerful fail to stand against its consequences. He pictures

the rule of wrong and the rule of right, and forcibly contrasts the effects of each on the prosperity of communities. Here are the results of injustice :—

“Lo ! with crooked judgments runs th’ avenger stern  
Of Justice rudely dragged, where base men lead  
Thro’ greed of gain, and often rights misjudge  
With verdict perverse. She with mist enwrapt  
Her eyes, and with her hand her face of men,  
To deal out ills to such as drive her forth,  
By custom of wrong judgments, from her seats.”—D.

And here, by contrast, are the fruits of righteousness and justice, practised by cities and nations :—

“Gladly peace  
Dwells in their cities, and the land is rich increase.  
Nor Zeus, whose radiant eyes behold afar,  
Hears a sound to heaven the signs of grievous war.  
Nor scathe nor famine on the righteous prey :  
Earth foodful teems, and banquets crown the day.  
Rich wave their mountain oaks ; the topmost tree  
The rustling acorn fills, its trunk the murmuring bee.  
Burdened with fleece their panting flocks ; *the race*  
*of men is happy, and the father’s face :*  
Still flourish they, nor tempt with ships the main ;  
The fruits of earth are poured from every plain.”

—E. 303-314.

In the lines italicised the old poet anticipates that criterion of honest wedlock which Horace shapes into the line, “The father’s features in his children smile” (Odes, iv. 5-23, Con.) ; and Catullus into the beautiful wish for Julia and Manlius, that their offspring

“ May strike  
 Stronger than the boy they meet  
 As his father's counterfeit;  
 And his face the index be  
 Of the father's sin and woe.”

—Ephialtes. (Theod. Martin).

After a further contemplation of the train of thought, to the opposite picture, and an appeal to the judges to remember those invisible watchers who evermore support the right and redress the wrong, as well as the intercession of Justice at the throne of Zeus for them that are labouring and oppressed, the poet here again resorts to irony, and, like Job, asks “ what profit there is in righteousness, when wrong seems to carry all before it?” But only for a moment. In a short but fine image, Perses is invited to lift up his eyes to the distant seat,—

“ Where virtue dwells on high, the gods before  
 Have placed the dew that drops from every pore.  
 And at the first to that sublime abode  
 Long, steep the road, and full of many a fold;  
 But to the few who seek it out, the path is plain,  
 Easy the path, and level is the plain.”

—E. 389-394.

He is urged again to rely on his own industry, and encouraged to find in work the antidote to suffering, and the favour of bright-crowned Demeter, who can fill his barns with abundance of corn. The which is laid up in your own granary (he is reminded in a series of terse economic maxims, which enforce Hesiod's general exhortation) does not trouble you like that which you

borrow, or that which you covet. Honesty is the best policy. Shame is found with poverty born of idleness; whereas a just boldness inspirits him whose wealth is gained by honest work and the favour of Heaven. Some of these adagial maxims will form part of the chapter on "Hesiod's Proverbial Philosophy;" and of the rest it may suffice to say, that the poet has his own quaint forceful way of prescribing the best rules for dealing with friends and neighbours, as to giving and entertaining, and with regard to women, children, and domestics. In all these maxims the ruling motive appears to be *expediency*. In reference to the fair sex, it is plain that he is on the defensive, and regards them as true representatives of Pandora, with whom the less a man has to do, the less he will be duped, the less hurt will there be to his substance. As old Chapman renders it,

" . . . . .  
A woman trust doth trust a den of thieves."

—C. 585.

As to family, his view is that "the more children the more . . . ." The best thing is to have an only son, to nurse and consolidate the patrimony; and if a man has more, it is to be desired that he should die old, so as to prevent litigation (a personal grievance this) between young heirs. And yet, adds the pious bard, it lies with Zeus to give store of wealth to even a large family; and he seems to imply that where such

\* "He that hath a wife . . . . . pledges to fortune."—BACON.



a family is thrifty there will be the greater aggregate increase of property. Such is the advice, he remarks in concluding the first part of his poem, which he has to offer to any one who wishes to prosper; to observe these rules and cautions, and to follow the systematic routine of the farming operations, which, to his mind, constitute the highroad to success.

From the very outset of the second part of the 'Works and Days,' a more definite and practical character attaches to Hesiod's precepts touching agriculture. Hitherto his exhortation to his brother had harped on the note of "work, work;" and now as agriculture was the Bœotian's work, he proceeds to prescribe and illustrate the *modus operandi*, and the seasons best adapted for each operation. This is really the didactic portion of Hesiod's Georgics, if we may so call his poem on agriculture; and it is curiously interesting to study, by the light he affords, the theory and practice of *very* old-world farming.

As apparently he was ignorant of any calendar of months by which the time of year might be described, he has recourse to the rising and setting of the stars, whose annual motion was known to him, to indicate the seasons of the year. Thus the husbandman is bidden to begin cutting his corn at the rising of the Pleiads (in May), and his ploughing when they set (in November). They are invisible for forty days and nights, during which time, as he tells us later on, sailing, which with the Bœotian was second in importance to agriculture (inasmuch as it subserved the exportation of his produce), was suspended, and works

on the farm came on instead. To quote Elton's version:—

“When Atlas-born the Pleiad stars arise  
 Before the sun above the dawning skies,  
 'Tis time to reap; and when they sink below  
 The morn-illumined west, 'tis time to sow.  
 Know too, they set, immersed into the sun,  
 While forty days entire their circle run;  
 And with the lapse of the revolving year,  
 When ~~the sun~~ the fields are green,  
 Law of the fields, and known to every swain  
 Who turns the laboured soil beside the main;  
 Or when the fields are dry, and the wind blows,  
 Fills the rich glebe of inland-winding vales.”

—E. 525-536.

With Hesiod, therefore, as with us, ploughing and sowing began, for early crops, in late autumn; and to be even with the world around him, and not dependent on his neighbours, a man must (he tells his ne'er-do-well brother) “strip to plough, strip to sow, and strip to reap,”—advice which Virgil has repeated in his first Georgic. He seems to imply, too, in v. 398, that it is a man's own fault if he does not avail himself of the times and the seasons which the Gods have assigned and ordained, and of which the stars are meant to admonish him. If he neglect to do so, he and his wife and children cannot reasonably complain if friends get tired of repeated applications for relief. But suppose the better course of industrious labour resolved upon. The first thing the farmer has to do is to take a house, and get an unmarried female slave, and an ox to plough with, and then the farming im-

plements suited to his hand. It will never do to be always borrowing, and so waiting till others can lend, and the season has glided away. Delay is always bad policy :—

“ The work-deferrer never  
Sees full his barn, nor he that leaves work ever,  
And still is out. Cuck-flying ease  
Gives him no rest, but he is still at ease.  
He that will not be busy, will be idle,  
And so will be, till he is old and idle.”

—C. 48-53.

Accordingly, on the principle of having all proper implements of one's own, the poet proceeds to give instructions for the most approved make of a wain, a plough, a mortar, a pestle, and so forth. The time to fell timber, so that it be not worm-eaten, and so that it may not be cut when the sap is running, is when in autumn the Dog-star, Sirius, “ gets more night and less day ; ”—in other words, when the summer heats abate, and men's bodies take a turn to greater lissomness and moisture. The pestle and mortar prescribed were a stone handmill or *catinus*, used for grinding wheat and other grain, and bring us back to days of very primitive simplicity, though still in use in the days of Aristophanes. So minute is the poet in his directions for making the axle-tree of a waggon, that he recommends its length to be seven feet, but adds that it is well to cut it a little longer, that it may serve for the head of the axle. The axles of modern carts are about six feet long. But his great concern is, to give full particulars about

the proper wood and shape for the various parts of his plough. The plough-tail (*ἄρσενος ἄκρον*, i. 170) is to be of ilex wood, which a servant of Athena—*i.e.*, a carpenter—is to fasten with nails to the share-beam, and fit to the pole. It is well, he says, to have two ploughs, in case of an accident to a single one. And whilst one of these was to have plough-tail, share-beam, and pole all of one piece of timber, the other was to be of three parts, each of different timber, and all fastened with nails. This latter is apparently the better of the two, that which is all of one wood being a most primitive implement, simply “a forked bough.” The share-beams of oak, and plough-tails of ilex oak. For draught and yoking together, nine-year-old oxen are best, because, being past the mischievous and frolicsome age, they are not likely to break the pole and leave the ploughing in the middle. I shall now give you a somewhat dry detail as to the choice of a ploughman:—

“*ἄρσενος ἄκρον* : one with bread  
 Of four-squared loaf in double portions fed.  
 He steadily will cut the furrow true,  
 Nor toward his fellows glance a rambling view,  
 Still on his task intent : a stripling throws  
 Heedless the seed, and in one furrow strows  
 The seed of idleness : his plough is  
 His longing for the day when he shall be a slave.”

—E. 602-609.

The loaf referred to was scored crosswise, like the Latin “quadra” or our cross-bun, and the object in this case was easy and equal division of the slaves’

rations. Theocritus, xxiv. 136, speaks of "a big Doric loaf in a basket, such as . . . garden-digger;" and it is probable that, in prescribing a loaf with eight quarterings, Hesiod means "double rations," thereby implying that it is good economy to feed your men well, if you would have them work well.

The poet next proceeds to advise that the cattle should be kept in good condition, and ready for work, when the migratory crane's cry bespeaks winter's advent and the prospect of wet weather. Everything should be in readiness for this; and it will not do to rely on borrowing a yoke of oxen from a neighbour at the busy time. The wideawake neighbour may up and say,—

"Work up thyself a waggon of thine own,  
For to the foolish borrower is not known  
That evil comes of borrowing;  
These . . .  
At home, before thy need so instant stood."

—C. 122-126.

A farmer who knows what he is about will have, Hesiod says, all his gear ready. He and his slaves will turn to and plough, wet and dry, early and late, working manfully themselves, and not forgetting to pray Zeus and Demeter to bless the labour of their hand, and bestow their fruits. An old addition to the poem describes the *trachylus*, who goes behind the plough to break the clods, and *give trouble to the birds* by covering up the seed. In Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians' (ii. 13), an engraving representing the

processes of ploughing and hoeing gives a slave in the rear with a wooden hoe, engaged in breaking the clods. A little further on, a reference to the same interesting work explains Hesiod's meaning where he says, that if ploughing is done at the point of mid-winter, men will have to sit or stoop to reap (on account, it should seem, of the lowness of the ears), "enclosing but little round the hand, and often covered with dust while binding it up." To judge by the Egyptian paintings, wheat was reaped by men in an upright posture, because they cut the straw much nearer the ear than the ground. Of course, if the straw was very short, the reaper had to stoop, or to sit, if he liked it better. He is represented by Hesiod as seizing a handful of corn in his left hand, while he cuts it with his right, and binding the stalks in bundles in opposite directions, the handfuls being disposed stalks one way and ears the other. The basket of which Hesiod speaks as carrying the straw, has been also in the same pages. This is the explanation given by Mr Paley in his notes. On the whole, the poet is against late sowing, though he admits that if you can sow late in the dry, rainy weather in early spring may bring on the corn so as to be as forward as that which was early sown :—

"So shall an equal crop thy time repair,  
With late sowing, if the weather be so fair."

—E. 676, 677.

In this part of the 'Works' our poet is exceptionally matter-of-fact; but as he proceeds to tell what is

to be done and what avoided in the wintry season, he becomes more amusing. He warns against the error of supposing that this is the time for gossip at the smithy, there being plenty of work for an active man to do in the coldest weather. In fact, then is the time for household work, and for so employing your leisure

"That, famine-smitten, thou may'st ne'er be seen

To "get a little lean;"—

—E. 690, 691.

a figurative expression for a state of weakness, which emaciates the hand and swells the foot by reason of weakness. As a proper pendant to this sound advice, Hesiod adds his much-admired description of winter, the storms and cold of which he could thoroughly speak of from the experience of a mountain residence in Boeotia. This episode is so poetic,—even if overwrought in some portions,—that critics have suggested its being a later addition of a rhapsodist of the post-Hesiodic school; and there are two or three tokens (*e. g.*, the mention of “*Lenæon*” as the month that answers to our Christmastide and beginning of January, whereas the Boeotians knew no such name, but called the period in question “*Phaenon*”, which is a more northern name). And yet a sensitiveness to cold, and a fairly accurate description of its phenomena, is quite in keeping with the poet’s disparagement of Aspera; and further, it is quite possible that, *à propos* of Hesiod and his works, theories of interpolation have been suffered to overstep due limits. Inclination, and

absence of any certain data, combine to facilitate our acceptance of this fine passage as the poet's own handiwork. Indeed, it were a hard fate for any poet if, in the lapse of years, his beauties were to be pronounced spurious: and his level passages alone left to us. We give the description of winter from Elton's version:—

" In January : every month ; beware  
 That keenly-piercing air  
 Which flays the steers, while frosts their horrors cast,  
 The northern wind, and, breathing on the deeps,  
 Heaves wide the troubled surge : earth, echoing, roars  
 From the deep forests and the sea-beat shores.  
 He from the mountain-top, with shattering stroke,  
 Rends the broad pine, and many a branching oak  
 Hurls 'thwart the glen : when sudden, from on high,  
 With headlong fury rushing down the sky,  
 Then deepening round  
 Boundless woods resound.  
 The beasts their cowering tails with trembling fold,  
 And shiver cold.  
 Though thick the hairy coat,  
 Yet that all-chilling breath shall pierce within.  
 Not his rough hide the ox can then avail,  
 The long-horned the gale ;  
 Yet strength to wound  
 The flock, with sheltering fleeces fenced around.

And now the hornèd and unhornèd kind,  
 Whose lair is in the quaking fly,  
 Whose



They seek to crouch, and creep, and hide,  
 Or lurk deep sheltered in the rocky den.  
*Like aged men who, propped on crutches, tread*  
*Tottering, with slow and shuffling head,*  
 So move the beasts of earth, and, creeping low,  
 Shun the white flakes and dread the drifting snow."

—E. 700-745.

The lines italicised scarcely realise the poet's comparison of the crouching beasts to three-footed old men, or old men crawling with the help of a stick, which in the original recalls, as Hesiod doubtless meant it to do, the famous local legend of the Sphinx.

"Now," adds the poet, "is the time to go warm-clad, thick-shod, and with a waterproof cape over the shoulders, and a fur cap, lined with felt, about the head and ears." He certainly knew how to take care of himself. But he is equally thoughtful for his hinds. When at this season the rain betokened by a misty morning sets in at night, and cold and wet interfere with husbandry, a time "severe to flocks, nor less to man severe," then, because workmen need more food in cold weather, but cattle, having little work by day and plenty of rest at night, can do with less,—

"Feed thy keen husbandmen with larger bread,  
 With thickened loaves, and more be fed.  
 Them rest assists; the plough and sickle  
 Recruits their vigour and supplies their strength.  
 This rule observe, with timely sowing  
 Gives every fruit and kindly seedling birth;  
 Still to the plough and sickle  
 The day to plough and the night to rest."

—E. 775-782.

And now the poet turns to vine-dressing. He dates the early spring by the rising of Arcturus, sixty days after the winter solstice (February 19), which is soon followed by the advent of the swallow. This is the season for vine-trimming; but when the snail (which Hesiod characteristically, and in language resembling that used in oracular responses, designates as "house-carrier") quits the earth and climbs the trees, to shelter itself from the Pleiads, then vine-culture must give place (about the middle of May) to the early harvest. The poet's words are sometimes:—

"Lo! the third portion of thy labour's cares  
The early morn anticipating shares:  
In early morn the speeded journey hastes,  
In early morn the speeded journey hastes,  
The time when many a traveller tracks the plain,  
And the yoked oxen bend them to the wain."

—E. 801-806.

A brief and picturesque episode follows about the permissible rest and enjoyment of the summer season, when artichokes flower, and the "cicala" (as Hesiod accurately puts it) pours forth "song from its wings" —the result of friction or vibration. "Then," he says, "fat kids, mellow wine, and gay maidens are fair relaxation for the sun-scorched rustic," who, however, is supposed to make merry with the cool shade and trickling rill quite as much as the cicala. Hesiod prescribes three cups of water to one of wine; and, as Cratinus's question in Athenæus — "Will it bear three

parts water?" — suggests, only generous wine will stand such dilution. If such potations are ever seasonable, however, it will be in the greatest heat of summer, when the Dog Star burns. The rising of Orion is the time for threshing and winnowing (*i.e.*, about the middle of July); and this operation appears to have been performed by drawing over the corn the heavy-toothed plank or "tribulum," or trampling it by means of cattle on a smooth level threshing-floor. In some parts of Europe, Mr Paley informs us, the old process is still retained. After the corn has been winnowed, Hesiod counsels a revision of the household staff, in language of which Chapman catches the humour:—

"Make then thy man-swain one that hath no house,  
Thy handmaid one that hath nor child nor spouse:  
Handmaids that children have are ravenous.  
A . . . . .  
Whose teeth are sharp and close as any comb,  
And meat him well, to keep with stronger guard  
The . . . . . forth thy yard."  
—C. 346-352.

When Sirius and Orion are in mid-heaven, and Arcturus is rising, then the grapes are to be gathered, so that Hesiod's vintage would be in the middle of September; and he prescribes exactly the process of (1) drying the grapes in the sun, (2) drying them in the shade to prevent fermentation, and (3) treading and separating the juice:—

"The rosy-fingered Dawn . . . . .  
Then bear the gathered grapes within thy walls.  
A. C. vol. xv. D

"The days are long, and the nights are long,  
 Basked in the radiance of each mallowing day.  
 Let five their circling round successive run,  
 Whilst lie thy grapes o'ershaded from the sun ;  
 The sixth express the harvest of the vine,  
 And teach thy vats to foam with joy-inspiring wine."  
 —E. 851-858.

When the Pleiads, Hyads, and Orion set, it is time to plough again. But not to go on a voyage ! Though, as we have before stated, and as Hesiod seems particularly anxious to have it known, he was no sailor, our poet gives now directions how to keep boats and tackle safe and sound in the wintry season, by means of a rude breakwater of stones, and by taking the plug out of the keel to prevent its rotting. The best season for voyaging is between midsummer and autumn, he says ; only it requires haste, to avoid the winter rains. The other and less desirable time is in spring, when the leaves at the end of a spray have grown to the length of a crow's foot—a comparative measurement, which Mr Paley observes is still retained in the name of some species of the *ranunculus*—crowfoot ; but Hesiod calls this a "snatched voyage," and holds the love of gain that essays it foolhardy. He concludes his remarks on this head by prudent advice not to risk all your exports in one venture, all your eggs—as our homely proverb runs—in one basket :—

"Tossed in the hollow keel : a portion send ;  
 Thy larger substance let the shore defend.

Fearful the losses of the ocean fall,  
 When on a fragile plank embarked thy all :  
 So bends beneath its weight the o'erburdened wain,  
 And the golden vessel of the sea is vain.  
 The golden vessel of the sea is vain.  
 Our every aim,—be moderation thine !”

—E. 954-962.

After this fashion the poet proceeds to give the advice on marriage which has been already quoted, and which probably belongs to an earlier portion of the poem. From this he turns to the duties of friendship, still regulated by caution and an eye to expediency. It is better to be reconciled to an old friend with whom you have fallen out than to contract new friendships; and, above all, to put a control on your countenance, that it may betray no reservations or misgivings. A careful and temperate tongue is commended, and geniality at a feast, especially a club feast, for

“When many guests combine in common fare,  
 Be not morose, nor grudge a liberal share :  
 Where all contributing the feast unite,  
 Great is the pleasure, and the cost is light.”

—E. 1009-1012.

And now come some precepts of a ceremonial nature, touching what Professor [?] calls “the finer moralities and decencies,” some of which, it has been suggested, savour of Pythagorean or of Judaic obligation, whilst all bespeak excessive superstition. Prayers with [?] propitiatory prayer, paring the nails off your “*bunch*

of *fives*" (i.e., your five fingers\*) at a feast after sacrifice, lifting the can above the bowl at a banquet;—all these acts of commission and omission provoke, says Hesiod, the wrath of the gods. Some of his precepts have a substratum of common sense, but generally they can only be explained by his not desiring to contravene the authority of custom; and, in fact, he finishes his second part with a reason for the observance of such rules and cautions:—

“Thus do, and shun the ill report of men.  
Light to take up, it . . . bearer pain,  
And is not lightly shaken off; nor dies  
The rumour that from many lips doth rise,  
But . . .”—D.

And now comes the closing portion of the poem, designated by Chapman “Hesiod’s Book of Days,” and, in point of fact, a calendar of the lucky and unlucky days of the lunar month, apparently as connected with the various worships celebrated on those days. The poet divides the month of thirty days, as was the use at Athens much later, into three decades. The thirteenth of the month is the best day for overlooking farm-work done, and allotting the rations for the month coming on; and it is a holiday, too, in the law-courts. The seventh of the month is specially lucky as Apollo’s birthday; the sixth unlucky for birth or marriage of girls, probably because the birthday of the virgin Artemis, his sister. The fifth is very unlucky, because on it Hecus, the genius who punishes per-

\* “A slang term for the fists, in use among pugilists.”—See Paley’s note on v. 742.

jury, and not, as Virgil supposed, the Roman Orcus or Hades, was born, and taken care of by the Erinnyes. The seventeenth was lucky for bringing in the corn to the threshing-floor, and for other works, because it was the festival-day, in one of the months, of Demeter and Cora, or Proserpine. The fourth was lucky for marriages, perhaps because sacred to Aphrodite and Hermes. Hesiod lays down the law, however, of these days without giving much enlightenment as to the "why" or "wherefore," and our knowledge from other sources does not suffice to explain them all. A fair specimen of this calendar is that which we proceed to quote:—

"The eighth, less the ninth, with favouring skies  
 And on the eleventh let thy flocks be shorn,  
 More fortunate, with fairer omen blest.  
 In the full noon, his fine and self-spun threads;  
 And the wise enmet, tracking dark the plain,  
 On this let careful woman's nimble hand  
 Throw first the shuttle and the web expand."

—E. 1071-1082.

Hesiod's account of the twenty-ninth of the month is also of a mysterious passage, not without a touch of the oracular and mysterious. "The prudent secret," he says, "one man praises one day, another another, but few know them." "Some-

times a day is a stepmother, sometimes a mother.”  
 “Blest and fortunate he who knowingly doeth all  
 with an eye to these days, unblamed by the immortals,  
 discerning omens . . . . .”

Such is the appropriate ending of Hesiod's didactic poem—a termination which ascribes prosperity in agricultural pursuits to ascertainment of the will of the gods, and avoidance of even the slightest omission of their festivals. The study of omens, the poet would have it understood, is the way to be safe in these matters.

The ‘Works and Days’ possesses a curious interest as Hesiod's most undoubted production, and as the earliest sample of so-called didactic poetry; nor is it fair or just to speak of this as a mere loose-hanging concatenation of thoughts and hints on farming matters, according as they come uppermost. That later and more finished didactic poems have only partially and exceptionally borrowed Hesiod's manner or matter does not really detract from the interest of a poem which, as far as we know, is the first in classical literature to afford internal evidence of the writer's mind and thoughts,—the first to teach us, in which to many readers lies the charm and attraction of poetry. No doubt Hesiod's style and manner betoken a very early and rudimentary school; but few can be insensible to the quaintness of his images, the “Dutch fidelity” (to borrow a phrase of Professor Conington) of his minute descriptions, or, lastly, the point and terseness of his maxims. To these the foregoing chapter on the ‘Works and Days’ has been



unable to do justice, because it seemed of more consequence to show the connection and sequence of the parts and episodes of that work. It is proposed, therefore, in the brief chapter next following, to examine "the Proverbial Philosophy of Hesiod," which is chiefly, if not entirely, found in the poem we have been discussing.

## CHAPTER III.

### HESIOD'S PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

A CHIEF token of the antiquity of Hesiod's 'Works and Days' is his use of familiar proverbs to illustrate his precepts, and to address his primitive audience. The other extant poems are not such as to admit this mode of illustration; but the fact, that amidst the fragments which remain of his lost poems are preserved several maxims and saws of practical and homely wisdom, shows that this use of proverbs was characteristic of his poetry, or that his imitators—if we suppose these lost poems not to have been really his—at all events held it to be so. It is, perhaps, needless to remark that the poems of Homer are full of like adagial sentences—so much so, indeed, that James Duport, the Greek professor at Cambridge, published in 1680 an elaborate parallelism of the proverbial philosophy of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, with the adages as well of sacred as of profane writers. Other scholars have since followed his lead, and elucidated the same common point in the father of Greek poetry, and those who have opened a like vein in

other nations and languages. Obviously an appeal to this terse and easily-remembered and retained wisdom of the ancients is adapted to the needs of an early stage of literature; and its kinship, apparent or real, to the brief "dicta" of the oracles of antiquity, would constitute a part of its weight and popularity with an audience of wonder-stricken listeners. And so we come to see the fitness of such bards as Homer and Hesiod garnishing their poems with these gems of antique proverbial wisdom, each drawing from a store that was probably hereditary, and pointing a moral or establishing a truth by neat and timely introduction of saws that possessed a weight not unlike that of texts of Scripture to enforce a preacher's drift. It is, furthermore, a fact for the common date of these famous poets, that both Homer and Hesiod constantly recur to the use of adages. With the latter the use of adages is more frequent. The honest thrift-loving poet of Aspera has evidently stored up maxims, on the one hand of homely morality and good sense, and on the other of shrewdness and self-interest. He draws upon a rare stock of proverbial authority for justice, honour, and good faith, but he also falls back upon a well-chosen supply of brief and telling saws to affirm the policy of "taking care of number one," and is provided with short rules of action and conduct, which do credit to his observation and study of the ways of the world. If, as we have seen in his autobiography (if we may so call the 'Works and Days'), his life was a series of chronic wrestlings with a worthless brother and unjust judges, it is all the more natu-

ral that his stock of proverbs should partake of the twofold character indicated; and we proceed to illustrate both sides of it in their order.

In distinguishing the two kinds of contention, Hesiod ushers in a familiar proverb by words which have themselves taken adagial rank. "This contention," he says, *ἡ δὲ μάχη* ("Works and Days," 24-26)—viz., "when potter vies with potter, craftsman with craftsman, beggar is emulous of beggar, and bard of bard." Pliny the younger, in a letter on the death of Silius Italicus, uses the introductory words of Hesiod *à propos* of the rivalry of friends, in provoking each other to the quest of a name and fame that may survive their perishable bodies;\* and Aristotle and Plato quote word for word the lines respecting "two of a trade" to which it will be observed that Hesiod attaches a nobler meaning than that which has become associated with them in later days. He seems to appeal to the people's voice, succinctly gathered up into a familiar saw, for the confirmation of his argument, that honest emulation is both wholesome and profitable. The second of Hesiod's couplets, *ἡ δὲ μάχη*, has a more moral tone, and conveys the lesson of temperance in its broadest sense, by declaring

"That *half* is more than *all*; true gain doth dwell

In the *moderate* life, not in the *excessive* one."—D.

Here the seeming paradox of the first portion of the couplet is justified and explained by Cicero's remark that men know not "how great a revenue consists in

\* Epist. III., vii. 15.

moderation ;" and whilst in the first clause a sound mind is the end proposed, the latter part of the verse is a reference to the frugal diet, which bespeaks contentment and an absence of covetousness, such as breathes in Horace's prayer :—

"Let olives, endives, mallows light  
Be all my fare,"—

—Odes, l. 31, 15 (Theoc. Martin).

and which, moreover, favours health and a sound body. It is unnecessary to point out the force of this Hesiodian maxim. So far as it is a maxim, "dinner of herbs," or to our own adage that "enough is as good as a feast;" but it may be pertinent to note that this Hesiodian maxim is, like the former, quoted by Plato, who in his *Laws* (iii. 690) explains Hesiod's meaning, "that when the whole was injurious and the half moderate, then the moderate was more and better than the immoderate." The next which presents itself in the 'Works and Days' owes its interest as much to the fact that it occurs almost *totidem verbis* in Homer, as to its resemblance to a whole host of later maxims and sayings. When Hesiod would fain enforce the advantage of doing right, and acting justly, without delay, he, as it were, glances at the case of those who do not see this till justice has taught them its lesson, and says, in the 'Works and Days' :

"The fool is not content with his lot."

—'Works and Days,' 218.

In the 17th Book of the *Iliad*, Homer has the same

expression, save in the substitution of the word "acts" for "suffers;" and it is exceedingly probable that both adapted to their immediate purposes the words of a pre-existing proverb.\* Hesiod had already glanced at the same proverb, when, in v. 89 of the 'Works and Days,' he said of the improvident Epimetheus that "he first took the gift "(Pandora)," and after grieved;" and it is probable that we have in it the germ of very many adagial expressions about the teaching of experience—such as those about "the stung fisherman," "the burnt child," and "the scalded cat" of the Latin, English, and Spanish respectively. To quote, as Burton, say, "He whom a serpent has bitten, dreads a slow-worm." Of a kindred tone of high heathen morality are several proverbial expressions in the 'Works and Days' touching uprightness and justice in communities and individuals. Thus in one place we read that

" Oft the crimes of one destructive fall,  
The crimes of one are visited on all."

—E. 319, 320.

In another, that mischief and malice recoil on their author:—

" Whosoever forgeth for another ill,  
Will find it done to himself;  
In ill men run on that they most abhor;  
Ill counsel worst is to the counsellor."

—Chapman.

\* Livy has "*Eventus stultorum magister*;" and the Proverbs of Solomon, xx. 2, 3—"A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple is despised."

And in a third, that

"Far best  
Is heaven-sent wealth without reproach possest."

The second of these sentences recalls the story of the "Bull of Pisuëris;" whilst another, not yet noticed, according to Elton's version, runs on this wise:—

"Who sows his seed in the furrow of the vine,  
With brightening lustre through his latest vine."  
—E. 383, 384.

More literally rendered, the sentence might read, "Of a man that regardeth his oath the seed is more blessed in the aftertime;" and so rendered, it curiously recalls the answer of the oracle to Glaucus in Herodotus (vi. 86), where the Greek words are identical with Hesiod's, and either denote an acquaintance, in the Pythoness, with the 'Works and Days,' or a common source whence both she and Hesiod drew. We give Juvenal's account of the story of Glaucus, from Hodgson's version:—

"The Pythian priestess to a Spartan sung,  
While indignation raised her awful tongue:  
'The time will come when e'en thy scepter shall be true,  
Thy hesitation to restore the trust,  
Thy fear to break the oath, shall be thy ruin;  
Apollo speaks it, and his voice is true.'  
Spartan youth, who sought to try  
If haply Heaven would grant them victory,  
Alive to fear, to death were hurried;  
Gave back the scepter, and the crown,  
Vain hope, by which they sought to win  
To loose the bonds of fate, and free the mind."

By swift destruction seized, the caitiff dies,  
 Swept from the earth : nor he sole sacrifice—  
 O . . . . .  
 And verifies the judgment of the shrine.”

—P. 251, 252.

Within a couple of lines of the proverb last cited occurs a maxim almost scriptural in its phraseology. “Wickedness,” sings the poet, “you might choose in a heap ; level is the path, and it lies hard at hand.” One is reminded of the “broad and narrow roads” in our Saviour’s teaching ; and the lines which follow, and enforce the earnest struggle which alone can achieve the steep ascent, have found an echo in many noble outbursts of after-poetry. The passage in Tennyson’s Ode, which expands the sentiment, is sufficiently well known, but perhaps it is itself suggested by the 20th fragment of Simonides, which may be freely translated :—

“List an old and truthful tale,—  
 . . . . .  
 Sheer and hard for man to scale,  
 Where the goddess doth not fail  
 Her pure precincts, ever nigh,  
 Unrevealed to mortal sight,  
 Unrevealed, save then alone  
 . . . . .  
 Whom heart-vexing toil for right  
 Bringeth up to virtue’s throne.” \*

the Duke of Wellington :—

“He that ever follows her commands,  
 Or with toil of heart and knees and hands,



Of a less exalted tone is the famous graduation of man's wisdom, which declares "the best who can conceive and carry out with foresight a wise counsel; next in order, him who has the sense to value and heed such counsel; whilst he who can neither initiate it, nor avail himself of it when thrown in his way, is the least wise of all."—('Works and Days,' 294-297.) This passage, however, has been thought worthy of citation by Aristotle. Another passage of proverbial character, but subordinate moral tone, is that which declares—

"Lo! the best treasure is a frugal tongue;  
The lips of moderate speech with grace are hung."  
—E. 1005, 1006.

And a little further on an adage of mixed character, referring to the "offspring of our unruly member," by saying—

"No surer whetter than the tongue is whetted wide,  
That the tongue is whetted wide."—D.

What a simple and direct teaching of common-sense—we are struck more by the plainness of the language than by the wisdom. The end of all his precepts is, "Brother, get rich;" or, "Brother, avoid poverty and famine." Even the worship of the gods are inculcated with an

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Through the long gorge to the far light hath won

eye to being able "to buy up the land of others, and not others thine" (341). He says, indeed, in v. 686, that "money is life to miserable men," in much the same terms as Pindar after him; but this is only as a dissuasive from "the fitting season is best." In effect he upholds the maxim that "money makes the man," though it is but fair to add that he prescribes right means to that end. To get rich, a man must work:—

"Famine evermore  
Is natural consort to the idle boor."—C.

"Hard work will best uncertain fortune mend."—D.

He must save, too, on the principle that "many a little makes a mickle," or, as Hesiod hath it,

"Little, little, oft done,  
In small time makes a good possession."—C.

It is no use, he sagaciously adds, to *spare the liquor when the cask is empty*:—

"When broached, or at the lees, no care be thine  
To save the cask, but spare the middle wine;"  
—E. 503, 504.

nor to procrastinate, because

"Ever with loss the putter-off contends,"  
—413.

and the man that would thrive must take time by the forelock, repeating to himself, as well as to his slaves at midsummer,—

"The summer day  
Endures not ever: toil ye while ye may,"  
—E. 698, 699.

and rising betimes in the morning, on the faith that

"The morn the third part of the work bringeth in:  
The morn makes short the way, and looses from thy pain."—C.

Shrewd and practical as all this teaching is, its author deprecates anything that is not honest and straightforward. "Dishonest gains," he declares in v. 352, "are tantamount to losses;" and perhaps his experience of the detriment of such ill gains to his brother enabled him to judge of their hurtfulness the more accurately. Referable to this experience is a maxim that is certainly uncomplimentary to brotherly love and confidence:—

"As if in joke, that he no slight may feel,  
Call witnesses, if you with brother deal."

—D. 371.

And there is a latent distrust of kinsfolk and connections involved in another proverb:—

"When on your home falls unforeseen distress,  
Half-clothed come neighbours: kinsmen stay to dress."

—D. 345.

Perhaps his bardic character won him the goodwill of his neighbours, and so he estimated them as he found them; for he says a little farther on, with considerable fervour—

"The host is not sorry, by his fire, to see  
That such a neighbour as thou hast made."

—C. 347.

And in this poem, of the neighbours there was, to judge by his teaching, a very fair amount of the thing, though scarcely that high principle of benevolence which is content "to give, hoping nothing again." Self-interest, indeed, as might be expected, leavens the mass of his precepts of conduct, which may be characterised as a good workaday code for the citizen of a little narrow world, shut up within Bœotian mountains. We laugh at the suspicion that animates some, and the homeliness of others, but cannot fail withal to be captivated perforce by the ingenuousness with which the poet speaks his inner mind, and pretends to no higher philosophy than the plainest fact. In the line which follows the couplet last quoted, and which says that "where neighbours are what they should be, not an ox would be lost," for the whole village would turn out to catch the thief,—it has been surmised that there is allusion to an early "association for the prosecution of felons" in the Æolian colony from which Hesiod's father had come; but these glosses of commentators and scholiasts only spoil the simplicity of the poet's matter-of-fact philosophy, which in the instance referred to did but record what Theophrastus afterwards seems to have seen, when, as a recommendation to a field for sale, he advertised that it had "a good neighbour."

Though the 'Theogony' is, from its nature and scope, by no means a storehouse of proverbs like the 'Works and Days,' it here and there has allusions and references to an already existing stock of such maxims. Where, in pointing a moral *à propos* of Pandora, he

takes up his parable of the bees, and likens them to the drones,

"They that do not sow, shall not reap the spoils  
Of others' labour,"—

—E. 797, 798.

Hesiod has in his mind's eye that ancient proverb touching "one sowing and another reaping," which Callimachus gives as follows in his hymn to Ceres (137)—

"And those who ploughed the field shall reap the corn"—

but which, in some shape or other, must have existed previously even to Hesiod's date. In most modern languages it has its counterpart; and it was recognised and applied by our Lord, and His apostle St Paul.\* Earlier in the poem, the saw that "Blest is he whom the Muses love" is probably pre-Hesiodian; but it is too obviously a commonplace of poets in general to deserve commemoration as a proverb. We cannot cite any adages from 'The Shield,' and an examination of 'The Fragments' adds but few to the total of Hesiod's stock. These few are chiefly from the 'Maxims of Chiron,' supposed to have been dictated by the philosophic Centaur to his pupil Achilles. One of these, preserved by Harpocration from an oration of Hyperides, may be thus translated:—

"Works for the young, counsels for middle age;  
The old may best in vows and prayers engage."

Another savours of the philosophy of the 'Works and Days':—

\* St Matt. xxv. 24; Gal. vi. 7; 2 Cor. ix. 6.

"Give up the vain and idle chase of kings."

Whilst a third might well be a stray line from one of the exhortations to Perses; for it deprecates the preference of a shadow to a substance in some such language as this:—

"Only a fool will pursue the shadow,  
That he the charm of doubtful chase may know."

Another proverb, preserved by Cicero in a letter to Atticus,\* looks very like Hesiod's, though the orator and critical man of letters dubs it "pseudo-Hesiodian." It bids us "not decide a case until both sides have been heard." And yet another saw, referred to the Ascræan sage, appears to us in excellent keeping with the maxims respecting industry and hard work which abound in his great didactic poem. We are indebted for it to Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, and it may be Englished—

"Seek not the crown, but the labouring shoulder!"—

an exhortation in accord with the fine passage in the 'Works and Days,' which represents Virtue and Excellence seated aloft on heights difficult to climb.

Perhaps also the following extracts from the extant fragments of the 'Catalogue of Women,' though not succinct enough to rank as adages, may lay some claim to containing a few sparkling drops of practical wisdom. The first, taken from the pages of Athenæus,† concerns wine that maketh sorry, as well as glad, the heart of man:—

\* vii. 18, 4.

† x. 428.

"What joy, what profit, what pleasure  
 To men who drink to excess. For wine to such  
 Acts insolently, binds them hand and foot,  
 Yea, tongue and mind withheld in bondage dire,  
 Ineffable! Sleep only saves them from it!"—D.

The second is a curious relic of the ancient notions of the consequences of gravity:—

"Nine generations of the old didding crow  
 Of old men's life; the lively stag outlasts  
 Twelve winters and the raven thrice the eagle.  
 Nine raven's terms the phoenix numbers out;  
 And we, the long-tressed nymphs, whose sire is Zeus,  
 By ten times more the phoenix life exceed."—D.

Enough, however, has been set down of Hesiod's proverbial philosophy, to show that herein consists one of his titles to a principal place among didactic poets. A plain blunt man, and a poet of the people, he knew how and when to appeal with cogency to that "wisdom of many and wit of one," which has been styled by our own proverb-collector, James Howell, "the people's voice."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE THEOGONY.

THE geographer Pausanias was the first to cast a doubt upon the received belief of the ancients that the 'Theogony' and the 'Works and Days' were by the same author. On the other hand, Herodotus attributed to Hesiod the praise of having been one of the earliest poets of Greece, and of having been the first to give a systematic account of the gods; and Pausanias himself, in his 'Description of Greece', mentions the 'Theogony' of Hesiod, which apparently correspond with passages in the work that has come down to us as such. Unless, therefore, there is strong internal evidence of separate authorship in the two poems, the testimony of a writer four hundred years before Christ is entitled to outweigh that of one living two hundred years after. But so far from such internal evidence being forthcoming, it would be easy to enumerate several strong notes of resemblance, which would go far towards establishing a presumption that both were from the same hand. The same economical spirit which actuates the poet of the 'Works' is visible also in the 'Theogony', where the head and front of Pandora's



offending is, that the "beauteous evil," woman, is a drone in the hive, and consumes the fruits of man's labour without adding to them. The author of the 'Theogony' holds in exceptionally high esteem the beneficent divinity Plutus, and this is quite consistent with the hereditary and personal antipathy to poverty and its visitations so manifest in the bard of the 'Works.' Again, there is reason to believe that the proper commencement of the 'Works and Days'—which, to translate the Greek idiom, might run, "Well, it seems that after all Contention is of two kinds, and not of one only" (v. 11)—is nothing less than the poet's correction of a statement he had made in his poem on the generation of the gods, that Eris, or Contention, was one and indivisible, the daughter of Night, and the mother of an uncanny progeny, beginning with Trouble and ending with Oath.\* We might add, too, curious coincidences of expression and verse-structure, such as the use of a characteristic epithet standing by itself for the substantive which it would commonly qualify (*e. g.*, "the boneless" for "the bones," "the silver" for "the sea"), and the peculiarity of the commencement of three consecutive lines with one and the same word. Instances of both are common to the two poems. But for the purposes of the present volume it is perhaps sufficient to have shown the very close connection which exists between the 'Theogony' and the 'Works and Days' of Hesiod. The fact, then, that Hesiod, living and labouring in the same age and country, and

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most part in husbandry, "collected for it in a fuller and a more graceful body the precepts with which the simple wisdom of their forefathers had ordered their rural labours and their domestic life;" at the same time that, "from the songs of their earlier bards, and the traditions of their forefathers, he drew the knowledge of nature and of superhuman things which he delivered in the popular form of the 'Theogony.'"<sup>\*</sup>

Of the aim which he proposed to himself in that ancient poem, no better description has been given than Mr Grote's, who designates it as "an attempt to cast the divine functions into a systematic sequence." The work of Homer and Hesiod was, to reduce to system the most ancient traditions of the Hellenic gods and demi-gods, and to consolidate a catholic belief in the place of conflicting local superstitions. So far as we are able to judge, Homer's share in the task consisted in the passing notices of gods and goddesses which are scattered up and down the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. For Hesiod may be claimed the first incorporation and enumeration of the generation and genealogy of the gods and goddesses in a coherent system; and so it was from his 'Theogony,' as Mr Grote has shown, that "men took their information respecting their theogonic antiquities; that sceptical pagans, and later assemblages of paganism, derived their subjects of attack; and that, to understand what Plato deprecated and Xenophon denounced, the Hesiodic stories must be recounted in naked simplicity."<sup>†</sup> Whence he derived his information, which is older than the so-called

<sup>\*</sup> 'Hist. of Greece, I., c. vi.

<sup>†</sup> Ibid., i. 15, 16.

Orphic Theogony—whether from Egypt, India, and Persia, or, as some have thought, from the Mosaic writings—it is lost labour to inquire. He certainly systematised and consolidated the mass of traditions, which came to his hand a more or less garbled and distorted collection of primitive and legendary lore. An especial interest must therefore attach to the study of his scheme and method, and it must be enhanced by the position which antiquity has assigned to him, in the history of the religious and literary world.

Hesiod's 'Theogony' consists of three divisions: a cosmogony, or creation of the world, its powers, and its fabric; a theogony proper, recording the history of the dynasty of Cronus and Zeus; and a fragmentary generation of heroes, sprung from the intercourse of mortals with immortals. Hesiod and his contemporaries considered that in their day Jupiter or Zeus was the lord of Olympus; but it was necessary to chronicle the antecedents of his dynasty, and hence the account of the stages and revolutions which had led up to the established order under which Hesiod's generation found itself. And so, after a preface containing amongst other matters the episode of the Muses' visit to the shepherd-poet, at which we glanced in Chapter I., Hesiod proceeds to his proper task, and represents Chaos as primeval, and Earth, Tartarus, and Eros (Love), as coming next into existence:—

“Love then arose,  
Most beauteous of immortals; he at once  
Of every god and every mortal man

Unnerves the limbs, dissolves the wiser breast  
By reason steeled, and quells the very soul."

—E. 171-175.

At first Chaos, and then Earth and Night, the latter of whom gives birth to Ether and Day; whilst Earth creates in turn the heaven, the mountains, and the sea, the cosmogony so far corresponding generally with the Mosaic. But at this point Eros or Love begins to work. The union of Earth with Heaven results in the birth of Oceanus and the Titans, the Cyclopes, and the hundred-headed giants. The sire of so numerous a progeny, and first ruler of creation, Uranus, conceiving that his sovereignty is imperilled by his offspring, resorts to the expedient of relodging each child, as soon as it is born, within the bowels of its mother, Earth. Groaning under such a burden, she arms her youngest and wildest son, Cronus, with a sickle of her own product, iron, and hides him in an ambush with a view to his mutilating his sire. The conspiracy is justified on the principle of retributive justice. Uranus is disabled and dethroned, and, by a not very clear nor presentable legend, the foam-born goddess Aphrodite is fabled to have sprung from his mutilation. Here is the poet's account of her rise out of the sea:—

"So severing with keen steel

The seed-bearer, he, the first, the first, the first,

Amid the many, the first, the first, the first,

Hurled them. And the first, the first, the first, the first,

Till now swift-circling a white foam arose

From that immortal substance, and a nymph

With a whirlwind in their midst. The wafting waves  
 First bore her to Cythera the divine :  
 To wave-encircled Cyprus, where she then,  
 And forth on Cyprus' bosom, in the arms  
 Of awful beauty, *Had pressed the sands, green herbage flowering sprang.*  
 The foam-born goddess : and her name is known  
 As Cytherea with the blooming wreath,  
 As Venus, the belov'd Cytherea, from the coast ;  
 As Aphrodite, the goddess of love, from the  
 Strait of Sicily, the mountainous waves.  
 Love tracked her steps, and beautiful Desire  
 Pursued ; while soon as born she bent her way  
 To the great city, her honours these  
 From the beginning : whether gods or men,  
 Her presence bless, to her the portion falls  
 Of virgin wife ; the smile and all the smiles,  
 And smooth the face, the heart, the love,  
 And dalliance and the blandishments of love."

—F. 258-283.

The concluding verses of this passage are notable  
 for the repetition of the fabled assessors of Venus ; and the  
 italicised lines, which follow the passage in Milton,  
 Scott, and Tennyson,\* may have suggested the invo-

\* "And when the morning incense, when all things that breathe  
 From the earth's great altar send up silent praise  
 To the Creator ;" &c.

—Paradise Lost, ix.

"And when the morning dew ;  
 The dew that on the grass  
 The dew that on the grass  
 The dew that on the grass"

—Lady of the Lake, i. 18.

cation of the benignant goddess in the opening of Lucretius :—

"Before thee, goddess, thee! the winds are hushed,  
 The sea is calm, the sky is clear,  
 The planets in their orbits move,  
 The planets in their orbits move,  
 And thy shining sandals with thee tread."

—Lucret. i. 7-12 (Johnson).

By the act of Cronus, the Titans, released from dur-  
 ance, arose to a share in the deliverer's dynasty, the  
 Cyclopes and Gigantes, it would seem, remaining shut  
 up in their prison-house. But before the poet proceeds  
 to the history of this dynasty and succession of rulers,  
 he apparently conceives it to be his duty to go through  
 the generations of the Titans, and to give a genealogical

"So fleetly did she stir ;

The flower she touched on dipt and rose,  
 And turned to look at her."

—Tennyson: 'The Lady of Shalott.'

Even more to the point, which is the charm to create verdure  
 and flower-growth which pertains to Aphrodite's feet, are the  
 following citations from Ben Jonson and Wordsworth :—

"The goddess, with her feet, did tread,  
 The goddess, with her feet, did tread,  
 The goddess, with her feet, did tread,  
 The goddess, with her feet, did tread,  
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot."

—Jonson: 'Sad Shepherd,' i. 1.

"Flora, with her feet, did tread,  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads."

—Wordsworth: 'Ode to Duty.'

minuteness which, it must be confessed, is now and then tedious ; though, on the other hand, there are occasional points of interest in the process, which would be interminable if not so relieved. It is curious, for example, to find “the Hesperian maids”—

“Witnessed by the gods the fall of many a maid  
Beyond the sounding ocean, the fair trees  
Of golden fruitage”—

—E. 293-297.

ranked with Death, and Sleep, and Gloom and its kindred, as the unbegotten brood of Night. Possibly the clue is to be found in Hesiod's having a glimmering of the Fall and its consequences, because death and woe were in the fruit of “that forbidden tree.” Again, from the union of Nereus, the sea-god *par excellence*, and eldest offspring of Pontus, one of the original powers, with the Oceanid, Doris, are said to have sprung the fifty Nereids, whose names, taken from some characteristic of the sea—its wonders, its treasures, and its good auguries—correspond in many instances with Homer's list in the *Iliad* (xviii. 39-48), and point to a pre-existent legend approached by both poets. In due order, also, are recorded the children of Tethys and the Titan Oceanus,—to wit, the endless rivers and springs, and the water-nymphs, or Oceanids, whose function is to preside over these, and to convey nourishment from the Sire to all things living. As to the list of rivers, it is noticeable that Hesiod includes the Nile, known to Homer only by the name of *Ægyptus*—and the Eridanus, supposed to

represent the Rhodanus or Rhone; also that the rivers of Greece appear to be slighted in comparison with those of Asia Minor and the Troad—a circumstance to be accounted for by the Asiatic origin of the poet's father, which would explain his completer geographical knowledge of the colonies than of the mother country. The names of the water-nymphs are referable to islands and continents—*e. g.*, Europa, Asia, Doris, Persia—or to physical characteristics, such as clearness, turbidness, violet hue, and the like. But the poet gives a good reason for furnishing only a selection:—

“More remain untold. Three thousand nymphs  
Of Oceanic line, in beauty tread  
The deeps of the wide dispersed  
depth of lakes,  
A blooming race of glorious goldesses.  
As many rivers also yet untold,  
Rushing with hollow dashing sound, were born  
To awful Tethys, but their every name  
Is not for mortal man to memorate,  
Arduous, yet known to all the dwellers round.”

—E. 492-501.

We must not trespass upon our readers' patience, by enumerating with the conscientious genealogist the progeny of the rest of the Titans. Two goddesses, however, stand out from amidst one or other of these broods, as of more special note, and more direct bearing upon the world's government and order. Asteria, the goddess of stars, a Titanid in the second generation, the only daughter of the Titan Atlas, the original stock, one only daughter, Hecate. The attributes of



this goddess, as described by Hesiod, . . . . .  
 from those ascribed to her by later poets, as to afford  
 strong proof of the antiquity of this poem. She is not,  
 as in later poetry, the patron of magic arts, but the  
 goddess who blesses labour and energy, in field, senate,  
 and forum :—

“When the mailed men rise  
 To deadly battle, . . . . .  
 To whom she wills, bids rapid victory  
 Await them, and extends the wreath of fame.  
 . . . . .  
 Of venerable monarchs. She is round  
 Propitious when in solemn games the youth  
 Contending strive ; there is the goddess nigh  
 With succour : he whose hardiment and strength  
 Victorious prove, with ease the graceful palm  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 To . . . . . fiery steed  
 . . . . . who labouring cleave  
 Through the blue watery waste the untractable way.”

—E. 581-595.

The other goddess, Styx, a daughter of Oceanus, is memorable not more for her own prominent position in ancient fable, than for having amongst her offspring those iron-handed ministers of Jove, Strength (Kratos) and Force (Bia), whom the classical reader meets again in the opening of the ‘Prometheus’ of Æschylus. Their nearness to Zeus is ascribed by Hesiod to the decision with which their mother espoused his cause in the struggle with Cronus and the Titans :—

"Lo! then incorruptible Styx the first,  
 Swayed by the awful counsels of her sire,  
 Stood on Olympus' top beside;  
 There graced with honour and with goodly gifts,  
 Her Zeus ordained the great tremendous oath  
 Of deities; her sons for evermore  
 Indwellers in the heavens. Alike to all,  
 E'en as he pledged his sacred word, the god  
 Performed; so reigned he strong in might and power."  
 —E. 537-545.

But here Hesiod has been anticipating the sequence of events, and forestalling, to this extent, the second stage of the poem. According to Hesiod, Cronus or Saturn was alive to the faults of his sire's policy of self-protection, and conceived an improvement in the means of checking revolutionary development on the part of his offspring, by imprisoning them in his own bowels rather than their mother's. Mindful of the destiny that "to his own child he should bow down his strength," he proceeded to swallow up his progeny with such regularity, that the maternal feelings of his consort, Rhea, roused her to a spirit of opposition. When about to be delivered of her sixth child, Zeus, she called in the aid of her parents, Heaven and Earth, in the concealment of his birth:—

"And her they sent to Lyctus, to the clime  
 Of fruitful Crete; and when her hour was come,  
 The birth of Zeus, her youngest born, then Earth  
 Brought forth the royal babe, to rear  
 With nurturing softness, in the spacious isle  
 Of Crete; so came she then, transporting him  
 Swift through the darksome air, to Lyctus first,

And thence upbearing in her arms, concealed  
 The infant, and with densest woods the Ægean mount  
 Impends. But to the imperial son of heaven,  
 Whom the King of Gods, the Father of the Gods,  
 The Father of the Gods, the Father of the Gods,  
 The Father of the Gods, the Father of the Gods,  
 Conveyed away: unhappy! nor once thought  
 That for the sake of his dear mother's breast  
 Invincible, secure; who soon with hands  
 Of steel, the infant, the infant, the infant,  
 From the breast of his mother, the mother, the mother,

—E. 641-659.

As the gods in ancient mythology grow apace, Zeus is soon ripe for the task of aiding his mother, whose craft persuades Cronus to disgorge first the stone which he had mistaken for his youngest-born, and then the five children whom he had previously devoured. A stone, probably meteoric, was shown at Delphi in Pausanias's day as the stone in question, and an object of old memorial to the devout Greek. The rescued brethren at once take part with their deliverer. The first act of Zeus was, as we have seen, to advance Force and Strength, with their brothers Victory and Rivalry, to the dignity of "a body-guard," and to give their mother Styx the style and functions of "oath-sanctioner." His next was to free from the prison to which their father Uranus had consigned them, the hundred-handed giants, and the Cyclopes, who furnished his artillery of lightnings and hot thunderbolts. His success in the struggle was assured by the oracles of Gæa (Earth), if only he could

band these towers of strength and muscularity against Cronus and his Titans ; and so the battle was set in array, and a fierce war ensued—

“ Each with each

Unintermitted ; nor to either host

Was issue of stern strife nor end ; alike

Did clash and crush the Titans of the war.”

—E. 846-850.

Hesiod's description of the contest, which has been justly held to constitute his title to a rank near Homer as an epic poet, is prefaced by a feast at which Zeus addresses his allies, and receives in turn the assurance of their support. The speeches are not wanting in dignity, though briefer than those which, in his great epic, Milton has moulded on their model. Our English poet had bathed his spirit in Hesiod before he essayed the sixth book of his ‘Paradise Lost ;’ and it was well and wisely done by the translator of the following description of the war betwixt Zeus and the Titans to aim at a Miltonic style and speech :—

“ All on that day roused infinite the war,  
Female and male ; the Titan deities,  
The gods from Cronus sprang, and those whom Zeus  
From subterranean gloom released to light :  
Terrible, strong, of force enormous ; burst  
A hundred arms from all their shoulders huge ;  
From all their shoulders they heaved up  
O'er limbs of sinewy mould. They then arrayed  
Against the Titans in the front stood,  
And in their nervous grasp wielded aloft  
Precipitous rocks. On the other side alert

The Titan phalanx closed : then hands of strength  
 Tremendous then the immeasurable sea  
 Roared : earth resounded : the wide heaven throughout  
 Groaned shattering : Reeled to the violence of the gods : the shock  
 Remote of Tartarus : the shrilling din  
 So they reciprocal their weapons hurled  
 Groan-scattering, and the shout of either host  
 Burst in exhorting ardour to the stars  
 Of heaven : with mighty war-cries either host  
 Encountering closed."

—E. 883-908.

A pause at this point may be excused, seeing that it affords the opportunity of noting the contrast between the heathen and the Christian conceptions of divine strength. In Milton the Messiah has a superabundance of might :—

"Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked  
 His thunder in mid volley, for he meant  
 Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven."

—Par. Lost, vi. 43-45.

In the conflict with the Titans, Zeus has to exert all his might to insure victory :—

"Nor longer then did Zeus  
 With his omnipoter  
 His whole of . . ."

The vaulted sky, the mount Olympian flashed  
 With lightning, and the heaven's fire poured  
 In flaming bolts, and the clouds were on fire.  
 Thunder from his lofty throne the lightnings flew  
 Reiterated swift: the whirling flash  
 Came down like storm, and the flames broke forth  
 Fell: roared around the nurture-yielding earth  
 In conflagration; for on every side  
 The mountains of forests on diking blazed:  
 Yea, the broad earth burned red, the streams that mix  
 With ocean and the deserts of the sea.  
 Round and around the Titan brood of earth  
 Rolled the hot vapour on its fiery surge.  
 The liquid heat air's pure expanse divine  
 Suffused: the radiance keen of quivering flame  
 That shot from within lightnings, each dim orb,  
 Strong though they were, intolerable smote,  
 And scorched their blasted vision: through the void  
 Of Erebus the red infernal glare  
 Shone, and the light grew with darkness. But to see  
 With human eye and hear with the ear of man  
 Had been as if midway the spacious heaven  
 Hurting with earth shocked—e'en as nether earth  
 Crashed down from the sky, and the mountain of heaven  
 Fell ruinous from high. So vast the din  
 When, gods encountering gods, the clang of arms  
 Came mingled, and the tumult roared from heaven."  
 —E. 908-939.

To heighten the turmoil, the winds and elements fight  
 on the side of Zeus. The tide of battle turns. Jove's  
 huge auxiliaries overwhelm the Titans with a suc-  
 cession of great missiles, send them sheer beneath the  
 earth, and consign them to a durance "as far beneath,  
 under earth, as heaven is from earth, for equal is the

space from earth to murky Tartarus." There, in the deeper chamber of an abyss from which there is no escape, the Titans are thenceforth imprisoned, with the hundred-handed giants set over them as keepers, and with Day and Night acting as sentries or janitors in front of the brazen threshold:—

"There Night  
And Day, nor passing, nor abiding still!  
The brazen threshold vast. This enters, that  
Forth issues, nor the two can one abode  
At once constrain. This passes forth and roams  
The round of earth, that in the mansion waits  
Till the due season of her travel come.  
Lo! from the one the far-discerning light  
Beams upon earthly dwellers: but a cloud  
Of pitchy darkness veils the other round:  
Pernicious Night, aye leading in her hand  
Sorrow, Death, and all her kindred powers of gloom,  
There hold their habitation, Death and Sleep,  
Dreaded to see their children climb  
E'er with his beam contemplate, when he climbs  
The cope of heaven, or when from heaven descends.  
Girt with the gates of the firmament the space  
Of earth and broad expanse of ocean waves,  
Placid to man. The other has a heart  
Of iron: yea, the heart within his breast  
Is brass unpitying: whom of men he grasps,  
Stern he retains: e'en to immortal gods  
A foe."

—E. 992-1014.

Of these sentries the readers of Milton's 'Paradise Lost' may recall the description at the opening of the sixth book; whilst the counterparts of the twin chie-

dren of Night may be found in the *Iliad*,\* as well as in the *Æneid*.†

Another wonder of the prison-house, in Hesiod's account of it, is Cerberus :—

“A grisly dog, implacable,  
 With tail and bended ears he fawning soothes,  
 Is his, malicious : them who enter there,  
 With tail and bended ears he fawning soothes,  
 But suffers not that they with backward step  
 Repass : whoe'er would issue from the gates  
 Of Pluto strong and stern Persephone,  
 For them with marking eye he lurks : on them  
 Springs from his couch, and pitiless devours.”

—E. 1018-1026.

In close proximity to this monster was the fabled Styx, in some respects the most awful personage in the ‘*Theogony*.’ The legend about her is somewhat obscure, but it is curious as being connected with that of Iris, the rainbow, whose function of carrying up water when any god has been guilty of falsehood seems a vague embodiment of the covenant sealed by the “bow set in the cloud :”—

“Jove sends Iris down  
 To bring the water from the Stygian spring,  
 The far-famed water, from steep, sky-capt rock  
 Distilling in cold stream. Beneath the earth  
 Abundant from the sacred river-head  
 Through shades of darkest night the Stygian horn  
 Of Ocean flows : a tenth of all the streams  
 To the dread Oath allotted. In nine streams  
 Circling the round of earth and the broad seas

\* *Il.* xiv. 231, &c.

† *Æn.* vi. 578, &c.



With sullen words he spake, and with many a sigh,  
 It falls into the deep: one stream alone  
 Girdles from the rock, a mighty bane to gods,  
 Who of immortals, that inhabit still  
 Olympus topped with snow, libation pours  
 And is forsworn, he one whole year entire  
 Lies reft of breath, nor yet approaches once  
 The nectared and ambrosial sweet repast:  
 But still reclines on the spread festive couch  
 Mute, breathless: and a mortal lethargy  
 O'erwhelms him; but his malady absolved  
 Will he not taste, till he has drunk the year  
 Of the earth's fruits: then, after nine years  
 From the Stygian depths he rises  
 His father's blood he drinks, then in his arms  
 Once joins he, "Thine eyes behold me still."

So great an oath the deities of heaven  
 Decreed the waters incorruptible,  
 Ancient, of Styx, which flows with the blood of  
 A rugged region: where of dusky Earth,  
 And darksome Tartarus, and Ocean waste,  
 And the starred Heaven, the source and boundary  
 Successive rise and end: a dreary wild  
 And ghastly, e'en by deities abhorred."

—E. 1038-1072.

Such, according to Hesiod, are the surroundings of the infernal prison-house which received the vanquished Titans when Jove's victory was assured. Not yet, however, could he rest from his toil: he had yet to scotch the half-serpent, half-human Typhœus, the offspring of a warlike giant, Tartarus and Earth, a monster more inspiring than any of his kind, a harder task to match, that Olympus might well dread another and

less welcome master should this pest attain full development. Zeus, we are told, foresaw the danger:—

“Intuitive and vigilant and strong  
 He thundered : instantaneous all around  
 Earth reeled with horrible crash : the firmament  
 Roared of high heaven, the ocean streams and seas,  
 And uttermost caverns ! *While the King in war*  
*Trembled Olympus : groaned the steadfast earth.*  
 From the sky a burning influence caught  
 The darkly-rolling ocean, from the flash  
 Of lightnings and the monster’s darted flame,  
 Hot fire of lightning and of dark wheels  
 Glowed earth, air, sea : the billows heaved on high  
 Foamed round the shores, and dashed on every side  
 Beneath the rush of gods. Concussion wild  
 And unappeasable arose : aghast  
 They saw the march of the infernal dead  
 Trembled : the sub-Tartarean Titans heard  
 E’en where they stood and Cronus in the midst ;  
 They heard appalled the unextinguished rage  
 Of tumult and the din of dreadful war.  
 Now when the god, the father of the light  
 Gathering at cross-roads, his bolts and flames,  
 The glowing thunderbolt and bickering flame,  
 He from the summit of the Olympian mount  
 Leapt at a bound, and down he came : his feet once  
 The horrible monster’s heads enormous, scorched  
 In smoke and flame and blood. While thus he stood  
 His terrible, his awful, his terrible, prone,  
 He fell : beneath his weight earth groaning shook.  
 From the sky a prodigy  
 A portent of the future, a portent of the past  
 From that unbounded vapour, and dissolved :—

As fusile tin, by art of youths, above  
The wide-brimmed vase up-bubbling, foams with heat;  
Or in the blast of the furnace, refined  
By burning flame, amid the mountain dells  
Nips in the secret ear of the black ore  
Of virgin tin, the carbon that is the foe  
Of blaying fire. He down wide Hell's abyss  
His victim hurled, in bitterness of soul."

—E. 1108-1149.

The italicised lines may recall the noble image in the 'Paradise Lost ;' \* a passage which Milton's editor, Todd, pronounces grander in conception than Hesiod's. But, as Elton fairly answers, it is only in Milton's reservation that he is superior. "The mere rising of Zeus causing mountains to rock beneath his everlasting feet, is sublimer than the firmament shaking from the rolling of wheels."

After quelling his mother, Zeus is represented by Hesiod as choosing for himself a suitable consort, and espousing Metis or Wisdom, so as to effect a union of absolute wisdom with absolute power. As, however, in the Hesiodic view of the divinity, there was ever a risk of dethronement to the sire at the hand of his offspring, Zeus hit upon a plan which should prevent his wife producing a progeny that might hereafter conspire with her to dethrone him, after the hereditary fashion. He absorbed Metis, with her babe yet unborn, in his own breast, and, according to mythology, found this task

\* "Under his burning wheels  
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,

easier through having persuaded her to assume the most diminutive of shapes. Thenceforth he blended perfect wisdom in his own body, and in due time, as from a second womb—

“He from his head disclosed, himself, to birth  
The Pallas, the first of the Gods,  
Rousing the war-field’s tumult, unsubdued,  
Leader of armies, awful, whose delight  
The shout of battle and the shock of war.”

—E. 1213-1217.

Yet, notwithstanding so summary a putting away of his first wife, Zeus, it appears, had no mind to remain a widower. Themis bare him the Hours; Eurynome the Graces—

“Whose eyelids, as they gaze,  
Drop love unnerving; and beneath the shade  
Of their arched brows they steal the sidelong glance  
Of sweetness;”

—E. 1196-1199.

and Mnemosyne, a daughter of Uranus, became the mother by him of the Nine Muses, celebrated by Hesiod at the beginning of the poem. With Demeter and Latona also he had tender relations, before he finally resigned himself to his sister Hera (Juno), who took permanent rank as Queen of the Gods. From this union sprang Mars and Hebe, and Eileithyia or Lucina: whilst according to Hesiod, who herein differs from Homer, Vulcan or Vulcan was the offspring of Hera alone, as a set-off to Zeus’s sole parentage of Athena. Of the more illicit amours of the fickle king of the gods, and of their issues, and

that the gods themselves are not to be despising nymphs or mortals, Hesiod has still much to tell, in his fashion of genealogising, before we reach the Heroogony, or list of heroes born of the union of goddesses with mortal men, which is tacked to the 'Theogony' proper, as it has come down to us. It is indeed a list and little more; tracing, for example, the birth of Plutus to the meeting of Demeter with Iasius in the wheat-fields of Crete; of Achilles, to the union of Peleus with Thetis; of Latinus, Telegonus, and another, to the dalliance of Ulysses with the divine Circe.

"Lo! these were they who, yielding to embrace  
 Gave birth to many a hero of the race;  
 A tale too common, but not less true."

—E. 1324-1236.

Thus virtually ends the 'Theogony' in its extant form, but our sketch of it would not be complete were we to ignore the story of Pandora and Prometheus, which has been passed over at its proper place in the genealogy, with a view to a clearer unfolding of the sequence of the poem. In the 'Works' this legend is an episode; in the 'Theogony' it is a piece of genealogy, *à propos* of the offspring of Iapetus, the brother of Cronus, and Clymene. Atlas, the eldest son, was doomed by Zeus to bear up the vault of heaven as an eternal penalty; Menœtius, another, was for his insolence thrust down to Erebus by the lightning-flash. Of Epimetheus, who in the 'Works' accepts the gift of Pandora, it is simply said in the 'Theogony' that he did so, and brought evil upon man by his act. Nothing is said of heedlessness of his brother's cau-

tion ; nothing of the casket of evils, from which in the 'Works,' Pandora, by lifting the lid, lets mischief and disease loose upon the world. The key to the difference between the two accounts is to be found in the fact that in the 'Works' Hesiod narrates the consequences of the sin of Prometheus ; in the 'Theogony,' the story of the sin itself. In the order of events that story would run thus : Prometheus enrages Zeus by scoffing at sacrifices, and by tricking the sage ruler of Olympus into a wrong choice touching the most savoury part of the ox. In his office of arbitrator, he divides two portions, the flesh and entrails covered with the belly on one hand, the bones under a cover of white fat on the other. Zeus chooses after the outward appearance, but, as Hesiod seems to imply, chooses wittingly, for the sake of having a gift to offer. Thenceforth in sacrifice it was customary to offer the whitening bones at his altars. But the god neither forgave nor forgot the cheat—

"And still the fire was stealing from the hearth,  
The strength of unexhausted fire denied  
To all the dwellers upon earth. But him  
Reverent Prometheus did beguile :  
The first deception in a flow'ring reed  
He stole of inexhaustible flame. But then  
Resentment stung the Thunderer's inmost soul,  
And his wrath kindled with anger when he saw  
That cunningly he had been thus beguiled.  
Straight for the flame bestowed devised he ill  
To man."

—E. 749-759.

Outwitted twice, he roused himself to take vengeance

upon Prometheus as well as his clients. On the latter he inflicted the evil of winsome womankind, represented by Pandora, and placed them in the dilemma of either not marrying, and dying heirless, or of finding in marriage the lottery which it is still accounted. As to Prometheus and his punishment, Hesiod's account is as follows:—

“Prometheus, versed  
In various wiles, he bound with fettering chains  
Indissoluble, chains of galling weight,  
Midway a column. Down he sent from high  
The broad-winged eagle: she his liver gorged  
Immortal. For it sprang with life, and grew  
In the night season, and the waste repaired  
Of what by day the bird of spreading wing  
Devoured.”

—E. 696-704.

This durance was eventually terminated by Hercules slaying the vulture or eagle, and reconciling Zeus and the Titan. Hesiod's moral will sum up the tale:—

“Nought it is, nor given thee to deceive  
The god, nor yet elude the omniscient mind;  
For not Prometheus, void of blame to man,  
Could 'scape the burden of oppressive wrath;  
And vain his various wisdom; vain to free  
From pain, or bound the immortal Titan.”

—E. 816-821.

The foregoing sketch will, it is hoped, have enabled the reader to see that Hesiod's *Theogony* is not a mere prosy catalogue, but a systematically arranged and poetical account of the generation of the gods of Hellas, relieved of excessive

Such as it was, it appears to have found extensive circulation and acceptance in Greece, and to have formed the chief source of information on the subject of the gods and the universe. This is not the kind of work to admit of a comparison of the so-called Orphic Theogony, which, in point of fact, belongs to a much later date, with that of Hesiod. Enough to state that the former, to use Mr Grote's expression, "contains the Hesiodic ideas and persons, enlarged and mystically disguised." But those who have the time and materials for carrying out the comparison for themselves, will be led to discover in the development of religious belief, in the bias towards a sort of unity of Godhead, and in the investment of the powers of nature with the attributes of deity, which characterise the Orphic worship and theogonies, indirect corroboration of the opinion which assigns a very early date to the simple, unmystical, and, so to speak, unspiritual view of the divine foretime, handed down to us in Hesiod's theogonic system.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE SHIELD OF HERCULES.

It was remarked at the outset that one class of Hesiodic poems consisted of epics *in petto* on some subject of heroic mythology. The 'Shield of Hercules' survives as a sample, if indeed it is to be received as Hesiod's work. Its theme is a single adventure of Hercules, his combat with Cycnus and his father, the winged, boar-like monster, at the Temple at Pagasæ. Shorn of a preface of fifty-six verses borrowed from the 'Catalogue of Women,' and having for their burden the artifice of Zeus with Alcmena, which resulted in the birth of Hercules, a preface manifestly in the wrong place, the 'Shield' is a single epic poem, intended as a theme for the description of the hero's buckler, to which the rest of the poem is ancillary. Among the ancients the balance of opinion leaned to the belief that it was written by the author of the 'Theogony;' but though there is insufficient ground for the whole dependence cast upon it by Muretus in his 'History of the Language and Literature of Antiquity,' it can hardly be maintained that the 'Shield of Hercules' is a poem

of the same age and authorship as the 'Works' or the 'Theogony.' The sounder criticism of Müller deems it worthy to be set side by side with Homer's account of the Shield of Achilles in the 13th book of the *Iliad*, and characterises it as executed in the genuine spirit of the Hesiodian school. Were it desirable, it might be shown from the writings of the ancients that the objects represented on Hesiod's shield were in fact the first subjects of the Greek artificers in bronze, and that there are proofs in the accoutrement of Hercules, not with club and lion's skin, but like other heroes, of a date for this poem not posterior to the 40th Olympiad.

It has, no doubt, been the ill-fortune of this poem to have attracted more than its fair share of botchers and interpolators, and the discrimination of the true *genuine Hesiod* belongs rather to a critical edition of the Hesiodic remains; but in the glance which we propose to bestow upon the work as it has come down to us, it will be shown that, after considerable allowance for interpolated passages, a residuum of fine heroic poetry will survive the process.

The poem proper, it has been said, begins at v. 57. Hercules, on reaching manhood, had undertaken an expedition against a noted robber, Cycnus, the son of Ares and Pelopia. This Cycnus used to infest the mountain-passes between Thessaly and Bœotia, and sacrilegiously waylay the processions to Delphi. It seems he would have been willing to buy off Apollo's

\* *Hist. Gr. Lit.*, i. 132.

wrath by building a shrine at Pegasus an altar of the horns of captured beasts; but the god loved his shrine too well to compound matters so easily, and instead of doing so, appears to have commissioned Hercules to exact reparation from the robber. The poem opens with the approach of the hero, with his charioteer and kinsman, Iolaus, to the robber's haunt:—

“There in the grove of the far-darting god  
He found him, and, insatiable of war,  
Ares, his sire, beside. Both bright in arms,  
Distant from each other, and far apart stood  
On the high plain, and the horses  
Trampled the ground with rending hoofs; around  
The dust of the hoofs rose in a thick dust,  
Up-dashed beneath the wheels the stones and  
The well-framed cars  
Rattled aloud; loud clashed the wheels, while wrapt  
In their full speed the horses flew. Rejoiced  
The noble Cynus; for the hope was his  
Jove's warlike offspring and his charioteer  
To slay, and strip them of their gorgeous mail.  
But to his vaunts the prophet god of day  
Turned a deaf ear: for he himself set on  
The assault of Heracles.”

—E. 81-97.

None but Hercules, we are told, could have faced the unearthly light with which the sheen of the warrior's armour and the glare of his fire-flashing eyes lit up the scene and its environs. He, however, is equal to the occasion. Probably, if we had the poem as it was written, the hero would not be represented as in the text, employing this critical moment in irrelevant speeches to his charioteer to the effect

that the labours (in which, by the way, his soul delighted) were all occasioned by the folly of that charioteer's father, Iphiclus. It was an odd time to twit his comrade and his brother's son with that brother's errors, when a fight with Ares, the god of war, was imminent. Iolaus's answer is more to the point. He bids his chief rely on Zeus and Poseidon for victory in the encounter, and urges him to don his armour in readiness for a fray in which the race of Alcaeus, to which Hercules *putatively* belongs, shall get the victory:—

“He said, and Heracles smiled stern his joy,  
 Elate of thought: *‘Forth to the work,  
 Most welcome. The fighting is on hand:  
 ‘Jove-fostered hero, it is e’en at hand,  
 ‘The issue to the encounter: thou, as erst,  
 In many a perilous fight, art swift of hand,  
 With the spear and the sword thy prowess to show;  
 And now, to the doubtful conflict, as thou may’st.’”*

—E. 157-165.

It would appear that the horse here mentioned owes its prominence to being of divine strain, and the offspring of the sea-god. The other member of the pair is not named, because of the transcendent breed of its yoke-fellow, who is, in the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*, said to belong to Adrastus.

But now the hero begins his war-toilet, donning his greaves of mountain-brass, the corselet which is Athena's gift, and the sword from the same donor, which he slings allwart his shoulders. Of the arrows in his quiver the poet says—

“ Shuddering horrors these  
 Inflicted, and the agony of death  
 Sudden, that chokes the suffocative voice :  
 With human tears : burnished the lengthening shafts,  
 And they were feathered from the tawny plume  
 Of eagles.”

—E. 177-183.

The heroic spear and helm complete his equipment, save and except the shield, to which it has been above noted that all the rest is introductory. This would seem to have been a circular disc, with a dragon for centre, and the parts between it and the outer rim divided by layers of cyanus or blue steel into four compartments of enamel, ivory, electrum, and gold. According to Müller,\* a battle of wild boars and lions forms a narrow band round the middle. The first considerable band which surrounds the centre-piece in the circle consists of four compartments, of which two contain warlike, and two peaceable subjects, so that the entire shield contains, as it were, a sanguinary and a tranquil side. The rim of the shield is surrounded by the ocean. An idea of the poem is best gathered from some of the details of the several parts. Perched in the centre on the dragon's head—

“ Stern Strife in air  
 Haggard ; whose aspect from all mortals reft  
 All mind and soul ; who'er in brunt of arms  
 Should match their strength, and face the son of Zeus,  
 Below this earth their spirits to the abyss

\* Hist. Gr. Lit., i. 132.

Descend ; and let the flesh that wastes away  
Beneath the sun, their whitening bones  
Start forth and moulder in the sable dust."

—E. 200-208.

Around this central image are grouped the appropriate forms of "Rout," "Rallying," "Terror," "Tumult," "Charging," and "Discord ;" but in close proximity to the dragon's head came twelve serpent-heads, breathing fire. Endowed, it should seem, with properties not inherent in the metal of the shield. The translation is as follows :—

"Oft as he

Moved to the battle, *from the dragon's head*  
*A sound was heard.*

The buckler's field with living blazonry  
Resplendent ; and those fearful snakes were streaked  
O'er their cerulean backs with streaks of jet,  
And their jaws blackened with a jetty dye."

—E. 224-230.

But the original seems to imply that the rows of teeth, with which each serpent was armed, rattled and clashed while Hercules was fighting. This, as Mr Paley suggests, may have been a mechanical device like that in the Trojan Shields mentioned in the 'Phœnissæ' of Euripides, v. 11-26 ; or a bit of the marvellous—a "Munchausenism," such as ancient poets affect in their tales of the wonder of some work of the gods. Whichever it was, a like demand on our credulity is made in two other passages ; one, where in another compartment Perseus is represented as seeming to hover over the shield's surface, like a man flying low in air, and to flit like a thought :—

"The bow, the spear, the shield of fair-haired Danae born,  
 Perseus, nor yet the buckler with his feet  
 Touched, nor yet distant hovered : strange to think ;  
 For nowhere on the surface of the shield  
 He rested : so the crippled artist god,  
 Illustrious, framed him with his hands."

The other is where the noise of the Gorgons' feet, as they tread, is represented as realised in connection with the sculptured shield :—

"Close behind the Gorgons twain  
 Came the clanking of their armor,  
 To seize him : from the pallid adamant  
 The clattering shield  
 Clanked with the clanking armor."

—E. 314-319.

Next to the serpent-heads on the shield was wrought a fight betwixt boars and lions—an occasion to the poet of spirited description :—

"Wild from the forest, herds of boars were there,  
 And lions, mutual glaring : these in wrath  
 Leaped on each other ; and by troops they drove  
 Their onset : nor yet these nor those recoiled,  
 Nor quaked in fear : of both the backs uprose,  
 Bristling with anger : for a lion huge  
 Lay stretched amidst them, and two boars beside,  
 Lifeless : the sable blood down-dropping oozed  
 Into the ground. So these with bowed backs  
 For this the more incensed, both savage boars  
 And tawny lions, chafing sprang to war."

—E. 231-242.

Next came the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, corresponding in the main with those in the first book of the *Iliad*. Both bands are wrought in silver, their arms and missiles in gold. The Centaurs, it is noteworthy, have not yet assumed the double form of man and beast, of which the first mention occurs in Pindar (*Pyth.* ii. 80), but are here the rude monsters we find under the same name in the *Iliad* (ii. 310-311), which is of some importance in fixing the early date of the shield. On the same compartment is wrought, the poet tells us, Ares in his war-chariot, attended by Fear and Consternation; whilst Pallas, taking the spoil, spear in hand, with helmed brow and her aegis athwart her shoulders, is depicted as she sees the battle in array, and rushes forth to mingle in the war din.

After a description following next of the material wealth of Olympus, which has been suspected of spuriousness, as savouring of post-Homeric style and ideas, occurs a curious presentment of a harbour and surging sea, wrought of tin, in which silver dolphins are chasing the lesser fish, and amusing themselves with gorging these, and spouting up water, whale fashion. The little fish are wrought in brass. A later addition to the picture is obviously interpolated from Theocritus (i. 39), namely, the fisherman on a crag—

“Observant, in his grasp who held a net,  
Like one that poising rises to the throw.”

What is needed to complete the picture in the Alexandrian poet is, however, *de trop* here.



The description of Perseus, and his encounter with the Gorgons, has been already noticed, though our citations did not include the Gorgon's head covering all his back, his silver knapsack with gold tassels, or his invisible cap, the "helmet of Hades," which occurs in the *Shield of Heracles*, and is passed into a proverb. Above this group were wrought two cities, one at war, the other at peace. The details of the former are life-like; able-bodied men engaged in fight, women beating their breasts upon the walls, the elders at the gates asking help of the blessed gods; whilst the Fates with interest survey and fan the work of siege and slaughter with a prospect to a coming banquet of blood:—

"Hard by there stood  
Clotho, and Lachesis, and Atropos  
Somewhat in *years* inferior: nor was she  
A child, but a woman, and of the Fates  
Elderliest, and the best of them."

—E. 346-350.

Had the translator read *size* for years, Hesiod's account would have tallied with the evidence of vases and terra-cottas, which represent Clotho as the tallest, and Atropos the most decrepit of the weird sisters. Appropriately near this group is seen—

"Misery, war and gladly, worn with woe,  
A little and a little with hunger's pain  
Did sit there: and the old men of the land  
O'er them, and the women of the land, and the  
Boys and girls, and the old men of the land  
All wide, disclosed in grinning agony

She stood : a cloud of dust her shoulders spread,  
And her eyes ran with tears."

—E. 355-362.

The italicised words in the above description recall a curious image of starvation, "pressing a tumid foot with hand from hunger lean," in the 'Works and Days' (v. 692), and to some extent point to a kindred authorship of the two poems.

From this ghastly picture the poet soon carries his readers to a contrast on the same band of the shield—a city at peace, which has been supposed to be meant for Thebes. We recognise the towers and the seven gates, and become spectators of bridal processions to the sound of the flute, as opposed as possible to the revels of the war-god in that city in its day of trouble—revels which Euripides described as "most unmusical." Here is some account of what is passing :—

"Some on the smooth-wheeled car  
A virgin bride conducted : then burst forth  
Aloft the marriage song, and far and wide  
Loud splendours flashed from many a quivering torch,  
Borne in the hands of slaves. Gay blooming girls  
Preceded ; and the dancers followed blithe.  
These with shrill pipe indenting the soft lip  
Breathed melody, while broken echoes thrilled  
Around them : to the lyre with flying touch,  
Those led the love-enkindling dance. A group  
To the flute  
Disporting, some in dances and in song,  
In laughter others. To the minstrel's pipe  
So passed they on, and the whole city seemed  
As filled with pomps, with dances, and with feasts."

—E. 366-380.

A comparison of this passage with its parallel in Homer's shield of Achilles (Il. xviii.), encourages the theory that both :— representation is more full and prolix in Hesiod. We quote the Homeric description from an unpublished translation : \*—

"Two cities of mankind he wrought. In one  
 Marriage was made and revelry went on.  
 Here  
 Forth  
 The nuptial chant ; and dancers blithely spring,  
 Cheered by the sweet-breathed pipe and harper's string,  
 And women at their doors stand wondering."

A distinct subject, having nothing to do with the nuptial procession, though perhaps an accessory illustration of a city at peace, is formed in the operations of husbandry ; ploughers *tucked up* and *close girt* are making the furrow, as on the Homeric shield, yield before the coulter. The equipment of these ploughmen carries us back again to the 'Works,' where the husbandman is advised "to sow stripped, plough stripped, and reap stripped," if he would enjoy the gift of Ceres ; and where "stripping" means probably getting rid of the cloak, and wearing only the close tunic :—

"Next arose

A field thick set with depth of corn : where some  
 With sharpened sickle reaped the club-like stalks,  
 Some bound them into bands, and strewed the floor  
 For thrashing."—E.

\* By Mr Richard Garnett.

And in close proximity was the delineation of a vintage; some gathering the fruit, vine-sickle in hand, and others carrying it away in baskets. By a marvellous skill in metals, a row of vines had been wrought in gold, waving with leaves and trellises of silver, and bending with grapes represented in some dark metal. Treading the winepress, and expressing the juice, completed the picture, which is less perfect than Homer's parallel passage.

But there was room found, it would seem, on this part of the shield, for the representation of various kinds, the chariot-race being the most elaborate description of the set:—

"The chariots were drawn by teams of horses,  
And the drivers, with their whips, urged them on;  
The wheels, as they rolled, made a loud noise,  
And the horses, as they ran, made a loud noise."

Rebounding from the ground with many a shock  
The wheels, as they rolled, made a loud noise, and creaked aloud  
The naves of the round wheels. They therefore toiled  
Endless: nor conquest yet at any time  
Achieved they, but a doubtful strife maintained."

—E. 413-420.

Around the shield's verge was represented the circumambient ocean, girding, as it did in Homer's view, the flat and circular earth with its boundless flood:—

"The ocean, as it were, surrounded the shield,  
And the earth, as it were, was in the center of the shield."

As in full swell of waters: and the shield  
All variegated with whole circle bound.  
Swans of high-hoivering wing there clamoured shrill,  
Who also skimmed the boistered surge with plume  
Innumerable: near them fishes 'midst the waves  
Frolicked in wanton leaps,"—

E. 424-429.

so like the life, the poet adds, as to exact the admiration of even Zeus, the artificer's sire and patron.

So much for the shield: what remains concerns the combat betwixt Hercules, and Cynus with the war-god to help him. The odds are partially balanced by the aid of the blue-eyed Pallas to the hero, who by her counsel forbears to dream of "spoiling the steeds and glorious armour of a god" a thing which he finds is against the decrees of fate. Nor does the goddess stop at advice, but vouchsafes her invisible presence in the hero's car. As the combatants come to close quarters Hercules resorts to mock civilities, and with taunting allusions asks free passage to the court of Ceyx, king of Iolchos, the father-in-law of Cynus. As a matter of course the combatants are divided. Hercules and Cynus leap: the gods, and the goddesses, drive a little aside to give free scope for the tug of war:—

"As rocks

From some high mountain-top precipitate  
Leap with a bound, and o'er each other whirled  
Shall these two mighty ones: and many an oak  
Cut down, and many a pine, shall fall, deep  
Of the sea, and of the land: as their course  
Rapidly rolls, till now they reach the plain;  
So met these foes encountering, and so burst  
Their mighty clamour. Echoing loud throughout  
The city of the Mæonians, and the  
Their lifted voices, and the  
And And, and Antenor's grass-girt walls,  
And Helios. Thus with amazing shout  
They joined in battle: all-consuling Zeus  
Then greatly thundered: down the clouds of heaven

He cast forth  
Of onset gave

—E. 506-522.

The simile of the dislodged rocks reminds us of Hector's onslaught in the thirteenth book of the *Iliad*; but the poetical figure of the cities re-echoing the din and of the rain-drops, and the portent of the bloody rain-drops, are due to Hesiod's own imagination. Close following upon these comes a tissue of similes, so prodigally strewn that they strike the critical as later interpolations. The issue of the fight is conceived in a more genuine strain:—

“Truly then

Cygnus, the son of Zephyrus, the son of  
Aiming to slay, against the buckler struck  
His brazen lance, but the buckler did not  
Broke not. The point of the lance did not  
On the other side, he of Amphitryon named,  
Strong Heracles, betwixt the neck and chin  
Drove his long spear, and, underneath the chin  
Through the bare neck smote violent and swift.  
The murderous ashen beam at once the nerves  
Twain of the neck cleft sheer: for all the man  
Dropped, and his force went from him: down he fell  
Hector. And then the son of  
Or perpendicular rock, riven with the flash  
Of lightning, so fell he.”

—E. 558-573.

Hercules, so far victorious, awaits the onset of the bereaved war-god with a devout heedfulness of his assessor's injunctions. She from her seat at his side interposes to apprise Ares that any attempt at revenge

or reprisals must involve a conflict with herself. But the god, sore at his bereavement, heeds not her word, and with violent effort hurls his brazen spear at the huge shield of his antagonist. In vain; for Pallas diverts the javelin's force. Ares rushes upon Hercules, and he, having watched his opportunity,—

“Beneath the well-wrought shield the thigh exposed  
 With a single blow he smote, and forthwith fell;  
 The god lay prone upon the earth, with his lance,  
 And in the midst of his agonies, the hero  
 Prostrate.”

—E. 624-628.

a curious *dénouement*, wherein an immortal is in bitter need of a *Deus ex machina*. The author of the ‘Shield,’ however, has provided for the death of Ares. Fear and Consternation had sat as helpers in the chariot of Cyenus, as Pallas in that of Hercules. They hurry the vanquished god into his car, and, lashing the steeds, transport him without more ado to Olympus. Here the poem should have ended; but a novelist, that the minor *dramatis personæ* must be accounted for. And so we have a few lines about the victor spoiling Cyenus, whose obsequies were afterwards duly performed by his respectable father-in-law Ceyx at Iolchos. But the tomb erected over the brigand and lane-robber was not suffered to remain in honour. In requital for the death of Ares—

“Aureus, under the white marble,  
 Sleeps the god who smote the hero.”

Commanded : for that Cycnus ambushed spoiled  
By violence the Delphic hecatombs."

—E. 681-654.

Thus ends our sole sample extant of the short epics which antiquity attributes to Hesiod. With all its repetitions and interpolations, there is in it a residuum of genuine poetry which is happily rescued from the spoils of time. Even as a "fugitive ballad," which Mure has designated it, it is too good to be lost ; and though we may not venture to attribute it confidently to Hesiod, the 'Shield' has its place in classical literature, if we can even accept it as "Hesiodian."



## CHAPTER VI.

### IMITATORS OF HESIOD.

ALTHOUGH it would be impossible to point to any direct imitation of Hesiod in poetry subsequent to Virgil's, and though even his is only imitation within certain conditions, it seems incumbent on us to notice briefly the influence, for the most part indirect and unconscious, which his poetry, especially his didactic poetry, has had upon later poets. Those shorter epic scraps, of which the 'Shield of Hercules' is a sample, have their modern presentment, if anywhere, in idyls and professed fragments; but the differences here betwixt the old and the new are so considerable as to make it unsafe to press the likeness. For the 'Theogony' we have one or two modern parallels, though it, too, has served rather for a mine into which Christian apologists might dig for relics of heathen mythology, than as a type to be reproduced at the risk of that endlessness which is associated with genealogies. But as regards Hesiod's 'Works and Days,' there can be no question that its form, and its union of practical teaching with charm of versification, possessed an

attraction for subsequent generations of poets, and, having been more or less borrowed from and remodelled, according to the demands of their subjects, by the poetical grammarians of Alexandria, was handed over as an example to the Alexandrianising poets of Rome. "The 'Phænomena' of Aratus," writes Professor Conington, in his introduction to the 'Georgics' "found at least two distinguished translators: Lucretius and Manilius gave the form and colour of poetry to the truths of science; Virgil and Horace to the rules of art; and the rear is brought up by such poets as Grätius, Nemesianus, and Serenus Sammonicus." But the 'Phænomena' of Aratus, and its Roman parallel, the 'Astronomica' of Manilius, though conversant with a portion of the same topics as Hesiod's poem, essay a loftier flight of admonitory poetry; and in them the advance of time has substituted for the simplicity and directness of Hesiod, rhetorical turns and artifices, and the efforts of picturesque description. It is the same with Ovid's contemporary, Grätius Faliscus, if we may judge of him by his fragmentary 'Cynegetica.' In carrying out his design of a didactic poem on the chase and its surroundings, he barter simplicity for a forced elevation of moral tone, and spoils the effect of his real insight into his subject by a fondness for sententious maxims "in season and out of season." Nemesianus, who wrote two centuries or more after Grätius, seems to have so completely made Virgil his model that the influence of Hesiod is imperceptible in his poetry, which is, and instinct with exag-

gerated imitation of the Augustan poets. On the whole, it is only between Hesiod and Virgil that solid ground for comparison exists; and such as institute this comparison will be constrained to admit Mr Conington's conclusion, that the 'Works and Days' as distinctly stimulated Virgil's general conception of the Georgics, as the Idyls of Theocritus that of his Bucolics, or the Iliad and Odyssey that of his *Æneid*. Uncertainty as to the extent of the fragmentariness of the model undoubtedly throws a verdict upon the closeness of the copy. Propertius may have had other and lost works of Hesiod in his mind's eye when he addressed his great contemporary as repeating in song the Ascrean sage's precepts on vine-culture as well as corn-crops (iii. 26, v. 77). Yet enough of direct imitation survives in the large portion of the first book of the Georgics (wherein Virgil treads common ground) to show that, with many points of contrast, there are also many correspondences between the old Boeotian bard and his smoother Roman admirer; and that the Virgilian copy is as unequivocal as it is instructive for a study of finish and refinement. Each poet takes for his theme the same "glorification of labour" which Dean Merivale discerns as the chief aim of the Georgics, the difference consisting in the homeliness of the manner of the Greek poet and the high polish of that of the Roman. Each recognises the time of man's innocency, when this labour was not yet the law of his being; and the treatment by each of the myth of a golden or Saturnian age is not an inappro-

prate ground on which to trace their likeness and unlikeness. As Hesiod's passage was not quoted in our second chapter, its citation will be forgiven here, the version selected being that of Mr Elton:—

“*When the gods had made the golden race,  
 Golden the race, they lived of old,  
 Wealthy in flocks, and dear to the blest on high,  
 Like gods they lived, with calm untroubled mind,  
 Free from the toils and anguish of our kind.  
 Nor e'er did sickness or death their lives divide.  
 The hand of death did not their flocks invade,  
 Strangers to ill, their lives in feasts flowed by:  
 Wealthy in flocks; dear to the blest on high:  
 Dying they did not, for they were not to die.* }  
*There was such good; the life-sustaining soil  
 Yielded them fruits, unbribed by toil.  
 They lived amidst quiet lands  
 And in the hands of their hands.”*

—E. 147-162.

Virgil does not set himself to reproduce the myth of the metallic ages of mankind; but having assuredly the original of the passage just quoted before him, has seen that certain features of it are available for introduction into his account of Jove's ordinance of labour. He dismisses, we shall observe, the realistic allusions to the sickness, death, and decrepit old age, which in the golden days were “conspicuous by their absence,” and of which Hesiod had made much. These apparently only suggest to him a couple of lines, in which mortal cares are made an incentive to work, instead of a destiny to be succumbed to; and the death

of the body is transferred to the sluggish lethargy of nature. To quote a very recent translator of the Georgics, Mr R. D. Blackmore :—

"'Twas *Jove* the plan,  
And *care* a whetstone for the wit of man ;  
Nor suffered he his own domains *to lie*  
*Asleep in cumbersome old-world lethargy.*  
Ere *Jove*, the acres owned no master swain,  
None durst enclose nor even mark the plain ;  
*He* *first* *the* *land*  
*He* *first* *the* *land*"

—Georg. i. 121-128.

In the same spirit Virgil, in the second book of the Georgics, idealises the serenity of a rural existence, when he says of him who lives it :—

" Whatever fruit the branches and the mead  
Spontaneous bring, he gathers for his need."

—Georg. ii. 500.

It is the idea of this spontaneity of boon nature which he has caught from Hesiod, as worth transferring ; and the task is achieved with grace, and without encumbrance. In the description of the process of making a plough, Virgil appears to copy Hesiod more closely than in the above passage ; and if we may accept Dr Daubeny's translation of the passage in the Georgics, the two correspond with a nicety in the interval between the two poets. The curved piece of wood (or *buris*) of Virgil ; the eight-foot pole (*temo*) joined by pins to the *buris* (or *basse*, as it is called in the south of France) ; the bent handle (*stiva*) and the wooden share (*dentale*),—have

all their counterparts in the directions for making this implement given by Hesiod;—and the learned author of ‘Lectures on Roman Husbandry’ considers that both the Bœotian and the Roman plough may be identified with the little improved *Herault* plough, still in use in the south of France.\* The storm-piece of the earlier poet, again, is obviously present to the mind of the graphic improver of it in the Augustan age; though, in place of one point, the latter makes at least half-a-dozen, and works up out of his predecessor’s hints a masterpiece of elaborate description. It need scarcely be remarked, for it must strike every reader of these poets, whether at first hand or second, that Virgil constructs his “natural calendar” upon the very model of Hesiod’s. He catches the little hints of his model with reference to the bird-scarer who is to follow the plough; about the necessity of striking deep or sow; about timing ploughing and seed-time by the setting of the Pleiads; and about divers other matters of the same rural importance. To quit the first book of the *Georgics*, we see Hesiod’s influence occasionally exerting itself in the third; for, *à propos* of the sharp-toothed dog which Hesiod prescribes in his ‘Works and Days’ (604, &c.), and would have the farmer feed well, as a protection against the prowling thief, we find a parallel in Virgil:†—

“Nor last, nor least, the dogs must have their place!

With cattle fed, they sleep, and guard the pasture:

Swift, when the wolf comes, they are ready to attack:—

With their sharp whining, they warn the flock,

\* Rom. Husb., 100-102.

† Georg. iii. 403-408.

Though nightly thieves and wolves would fain attack,  
And fierce Iberians never spare thy back."

—Blackmore, 94, 95.

And a lover of Hesiod's simple muse would be struck again and again, in the perusal of the four Georgics, with expansions of some germ from the older poet, calculated to make him speedily recognize the genius of both the original and the imitator. The landmarks and framework, as it were, of both, are the risings and settings of stars, the migrations of birds, and so forth; and though with Hesiod it was simplicity and nature that prompted him to avail himself of these, it is no small compliment that Virgil saw their aptitude for transference, and turned what was so spontaneous and unstudied to the purposes of art and culture. It is no fault, by the way, of Virgil, that he has not reproduced more fully and faithfully Hesiod's catalogue of "Lucky and Unlucky Days," at the end of his poem. The original is obscure and ambiguous. Virgil has caught all the transmutable matter in his passage of the first Georgic.\*

As has been already said, when we have done with Virgil the resemblances of his successors and imitators to Hesiod are very faint and indistinct. To pass to our own poetry, it is natural to inquire, Have we aught of a kindred character and scope, that can claim to be accounted in any manner akin to Hesiod's *Works and Days*? It need hardly be said that there is not a shadow of resemblance between him and Darwin

or Bloomfield, though we have somewhere seen their names, as poets, set in juxtaposition. He is their master as a poet; he is their superior in simplicity. He is essentially ancient; they are wholly and entirely modern in thought, form, and expression. The didactic style, no doubt, has lent Hesiod's form to many of the compositions of the Augustan period of English literature. "We have had," says Mr Conington, in his introduction to the *Georgics*, "Essays on Satire, Essays on unnatural Flights in Poetry, Essays on translated Verse, Essays on Criticism, Essays on Man, Arts of preserving Health, Arts of Dancing, and even Arts of Cookery; the Chase, the Fleece, and the Sugar-cane." But, with his usual clear-sightedness, the late Oxford Professor of Latin saw that all these have grasped simply the form, and let go the spirit, of their model. The real parallel is to be found between the Ascrean farmer-poet and the quaint shrewd "British Varro" of the sixteenth century—

"Who sometime made the points of husbandry"—

Thomas Tusser, gentleman: a worthy whose "five hundred points, as well for the champion or open country as for the woodland or several," are quite worth the study of individual readers, not to say of agricultural colleges; so much wisdom, wit, and sound sense do they bring together into verse, which is, in very many characteristics, truly Hesiodian.

Endowed with an ear for music and a taste for farming, a compound of the singing-man (of St Paul's and Norwich cathedrals) and of the Suffolk grazier, a



liberally-educated, and a man of letters, who possessed several qualifications for the rank of our "English Hesiod." But unlike, so far as we know, the father of Hesiodic poetry, neither his farming nor his poetry brought him any pecuniary gain or profit; and his own generation regarded him as one who, with "the gift of sharpening others by his advice of wit," combined an incapacity to thrive in his own person. He was born in 1523, and died in 1580. His 'Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry' was printed in 1557; and no one will gainsay, after perusal of them, the opinion that, in the words of Dr Thomas Warton,\* "this old English Georgic has much more of the simplicity of Hesiod than of the elegance of Virgil." Homely, quaint, and full of observation, his matter is curiously akin to that of the old Boeotian, after a due allowance for the difference of time and place; while the manner and measures are Tusser's own, and notable, not indeed as bearing any resemblance to the Hesiodic hexameters, but for a facility and variety consistent with the author's musical attainments, which are demonstrated in his use—indeed it may be his invention—of more than one popular English metre.

Although Tusser was indebted to Eton and King's College for his education, we have no reason to suppose that he had such acquaintance with Hesiod as could have suggested the shape and scope of his poem. It is better to attribute the coincidence of form to the practical turn and homely bent of the muse of each. That there is such coincidence will

\* History of English Poetry, iii. 298-310.

be patent to the most cursory reader: the arrangement by months and by seasons, the counsels as to thrift and good economy, the eye to a well-ordered house, ever and anon provoke comparison. Warton, indeed, by a slip of the pen, denies the English Hesiod the *virtus* which indulges in digressions and invocations, and avers that "Ceres and Pan are not once named" by Tusser. But in an introduction to his book may be found at once a refutation of this not very serious charge, and, what is perhaps more to the point, a profession of the author's purpose in the volume, which has entitled him to a place of honour among early English poets. He writes as follows:—

"To the point which I have in view, I point,  
 As I shall with thee here to point;  
 Yet to the point, I think, I amoint,  
 Is all in all, and needful true:  
 As for the rest,  
 Thus think I best,  
 As friend doth guest,  
 With hand in hand to lead thee forth  
 To Ceres' camp, there to behold  
 A thousand things as richly worth  
 As any pearl is worthy gold."

—Mavor's Tusser, xiii.

In the body of the work, expressions, sentiments, and sage counsels again and again remind us of Hesiod's lectures to Perses. The lesson that "'tis ill sparing the liquor at the bottom of the cask" reappears in such stanzas as—

"Son, think not thy money purse-bottom to burn,  
 But keep it for profit to serve thine own turn:

A fool and his money be soon at debate,  
Which after, with sorrow, repents him too late."

—xxiii. 11.

"Some spareth too late, and a number with him—  
The fool at the bottom, the wise at the brim :  
Who careth nor spareth till spent he hath all,  
(Or till it is, : : : : : be careful he shall."

—xxviii. 34.

At the same time he commends, quite in Hesiod's style, a prudent avoidance of the law-courts :—

"Leave : : : : : on,  
And tend to such doings as stands thee upon.  
For G : : : : :  
And : : : : :"

—xxix. 39.

Quite in Hesiod's groove, too, is Tusser's opinion about borrowing and lending; and his adagial way of discouraging the claims of relations and connections to a share in our farm profits savours curiously of the counsel of the 'Works and Days :'

"Be pinchèd by : : : : :  
Nor also by spending, by such as come in :  
Nor put to thine hand betwixt bark and the tree,  
For : : : : : so pinchèd thou be.  
As lending to neighbour in time of his need  
Wins love of thy : : : : :  
So never to crave, but to live of thine own,  
Thy : : : : :"

—xxvii. 30, 31.

We have seen, too, how Hesiod makes a point of prescribing very strictly the staff which a farmer may

keep without detriment to his purse and garner, of cautioning against too many helps, and so forth. Tusser is a little in advance of the Boeotian farmer-poet as to the full complement of hinds and dairy-maids; but the spirit of the following stanza is in evidence in the tone of the elder bard:—

And Jankin and Jennykin cozen thee so,  
To make t' . . . . .

—xxx. 45.

It might be shown by other quotations that Tusser, like Hesiod, attaches due importance to the performance of religious ceremonies, and inculcates in fitting language the wisdom of pious Providence; that he upholds well-timed hospitality, and commends a principle of liberality towards man or beast, if they deserve it. Of course, too, even in his shrewd homeliness, he does not so entirely as Hesiod calculate his hospitalities and liberality with a sole eye to getting a *quid pro quo*. But it is perhaps more to the purpose to cite a few additional stanzas of Tusser's "Advice to Husbandmen," according to the season or month, with a stray verse or two which, *mutatis* . . . . . serve to show that the spirit of Tusser was in effect the same which animated Hesiod so many centuries before him. This quatrain from "December's Husbandry" is an obvious parallel, to begin with:—

"Yokes, forks, and such other let bailiff spy out,  
And gather the same, as he walketh about ;

And after, at leisure, let this be his hire,  
To *beath* them and trim them at home by the fire.\*

—lx. 9.

Here again, in "June's Husbandry," is good provision for hay-making and hauling:—

"Provide of . . .  
Lest work and the workman unoccupied stand:  
Love seldom to borrow, that thinkest to save,  
For he that once lendeth twice looketh to have.

Let cart be well searchèd without and within,  
Well clouted and greased, . . . begin:  
Thy hay being carried, though carter had sworn,  
Cart's bottom well boarded is saving of corn."

—p. 163.

And here sound practical counsel (sadly neglected too often) for insuring a safe corn-harvest:—

"Make suer of reapers, get harvest in hand:  
The corn that is ripe doth but shed as it stand.  
Be thankful . . .  
And willing . . .

—p. 182.

One would have liked to be able to think that so sound a counsellor had made a better trade of farming than he seems to have done. His ideas of being himself *captain* of every muster of his hands (p. 169), of encouraging them by extra wages at time of stress, and indeed all his suggestive hints, are fresh and pertinent even at this latter day; and if Thomas Tusser were more read, he would not fail of being oftener quoted.

—N. T. . . . fire.  
—N. T. . . .

How timely, for example, is this advice to the farmer, which in a Christian world is almost always accepted, no matter what may have been the demands upon him of the ill-advised amongst his labourers !—

“Once ended the harvest, let none be beguiled ;  
Please such as did help thee—man, woman, and child :  
Thus doing, what they can, they can,  
Thou winnest the praise of the labouring man.”

—p. 188.

But, to complete our parallel with Hesiod, Tusser has his descriptions of the winds and planets ; is alive to the wisdom of the “farm and fruit of old,” as well as of the improved courses of husbandry in his own day : and if he now and then strikes out paths which have no parallel in Hesiod, even in such cases the homeliness and *naïveté* of his counsel savours of the ancient poet in whose footsteps he so distinctly trod. Though the domestic fowl does not figure in the ‘Works and Days,’ and the domestic cat is equally unmentioned by the Boeotian didactic poet, the following mention of them both by Tusser reminds us of his practical economic views, and would not have been deemed by him beneath the dignity of the subject, had poultry and mousers asserted the importance in old days which they now demand :—

“To rear up much poultry and want the barn-door  
Is nought for the poulter, and worse for the poor ;  
So now to keep hogs, and to starve them for meat,  
Is as to keep dogs for to bawl in the street.

As cat, a good mouser, is needful in house,  
 Because for her commons she killeth the mouse ;  
 So ravening curs, as a many do keep,  
 Biting and baying will do, and kill the dog to kill sheep."  
 —p. 48, 49.

Dr Thomas Warton, indeed, was disposed to regard Tusser as the mere rude beginner of what Mason perfected in his 'English Garden;' but it is a reasonable matter of taste whether the latter's *English Garden* comes up to the former in aught save an elegance bordering on affectation; and certainly there is nothing in Mason to suggest the faintest comparison with Hesiod's didactic poem. Tusser's work is probably its closest parallel in the English literature.

It remains to inquire whether Hesiod's 'Theogony' is not a valuable work of practical utility. This is the work on which we have been dwelling. But this question is easily answered in the negative. The attempts of the so-called Orphic poets—the most considerable of whom were Cereops, a Pythagorean, and Onemacritus, a contemporary of the Pisistratids—to improve on the elder theogonies and cosmogonies, can hardly be mentioned in this category, being more mystical than mythical, and in the nature of refinements and abstractions, higher than the Hesiodic chaos. Nor, though full of mythologic learning even to cumbrousness, can the five hymns of the Alexandrian Callimachus be said to have aught of resemblance to the venerable system of Greek theogonies, which owes its promulgation to the genius of Hesiod. Studied and laboured to a fault, the legends which he connects

with the subjects of each hymn in succession are tricked out with poetic devices very alien to the more direct muse of Hesiod; and though Callimachus professes to record the speeches of Zeus and Artemis, and to divine the thoughts and feelings that animate the Olympians, his readers cannot help feeling that he is doing so in a manner which is not fully believed and which, though it suited the sceptical Lucian to twit as assumed, and unattended by results, certainly imparts an air of earnestness to his poetry.\* Furthermore—and this is the plainest note of difference—the hymns of Callimachus have little or no pretence to be “genealogies,”—a form of poetry, to say the truth, not sufficiently attractive to please an advanced stage of literary cultivation, and a form, too, that lacks any memorable imitation in Latin poetry. To glance at our own poetic literature, the nearest approach to the form and scope of the ‘Theogony’ is to be found, it strikes us, in Drayton’s ‘Polyolbion,’ a poem characterised by the same endeavour to systematise a vast mass of information, and to genealogise, so to speak, the British hills, and woods, and rivers, which are personified in it.

Drayton, it cannot be denied, has infinitely more fancy, and lightens the burden of his accumulated detail by much greater liveliness and idealism; yet it is impossible not to be struck also with his enumeration of the streams and mountains of a given district, each invested with a personality, each of them regarded as of kin to its fellow, as a singular revival of Hesiod’s

\* Dialogue between Lucian and Hesiod, i. 35.



method in his 'Theogony;' a revival, to judge from a passage in his first song, . . . . . :—

"Ye sacred bards, that to your harps' melodious strings  
 Sung the ancient heroes' deeds (the monuments of kings),  
 And in your dreadful voice . . . . .  
 The . . . . .  
 . . . . . British rites  
 And dwelt in darksome caves, there counselling with  
 sprites

(But their opinion failed, by error led away,  
 As since clear truth hath showed to their posterity),  
 When these our souls by death our bodies do forsake,  
 They instantly again do other bodies take ;  
 I could have wished your spirits redoubled in my breast,  
 To give my . . . . ."

—Polyolb., Song i. 30-42.

Our theory of a conscious reference to Hesiod's 'Theogony' by Drayton depends on the fourth verse of this extract; but, independently of this, almost any page in the 'Polyolbian' would furnish one or more illustrations of genealogism curiously Hesiodic. We might cite the rivers of Monmouth, Brecon, and Glamorgan, in the fourth song, or the Herefordshire streams in the seventh; but lengthy citations are impossible, and short extracts will ill represent the likeness which a wider comparison would confirm. In Pope's "Windsor Forest," the enumeration of the "sea-born brothers" of Old Father Thames, from "winding Isis" to "silent Darent,"

"Who swell with tributary urns his flood,"

is indubitably a leaf out of Drayton's book, and so

indirectly a tribute to Hesiod. Darwin's 'Botanic Garden,' and the 'Loves of the Plants,' affect indeed the genesis of nymphs and sylphs, of gnomes and salamanders; but the fanciful parade of these, amidst a crowd of metaphors, tropes, and descriptions, has nothing in it to remind us of Hesiod's 'Theogony,' unless it be a more tedious minuteness, and an exaggerated affectation of allegoric system. In truth, however, Hesiod's 'Theogony' is a work of which this or that side may be susceptible of parallel, but to which, in its own kind, and taken as a whole, none like nor second has arisen.

The 'Shield' and the 'Works and Days' are of too doubtful authorship to admit of a parallelism; and so our task of laying before the reader a sketch of the life, works, and after-influence of the Ascræan poet is completed.

# THEOGNIS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THEOGNIS IN YOUTH AND PROSPERITY.

WITH the life of Hesiod politics have little or no connection; in that of Theognis we find them playing an essential inseparable part. And it is curious that the very feature which both poets have in common, their subject-matter, is that which forms the most striking point of contrast and token of the ancient world's advancement—namely, that whereas in Hesiod's political status is so unimportant as to be overlooked even by himself, with Theognis it occupies more space in his elegies than his social relations or his religious opinions. In fact, his personal and political life are so intermixed, that the internal evidence as to both must be collected in one skein, and cannot be separately unwound, unless at the risk of missing somewhat of the interest of his remains, which consists chiefly in the personality of the poet.

It is true that the Greek writers upon Theognis  
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as a teacher of wisdom and virtue, by means of detached maxims and apothegms in elegiac verse, and would probably have been loath to recognise any element in his poetry which was personal or limited to particular times and situations; yet it is now fully established that he was one of the same section of poets with Callinus, Tyrtæus, Solon, and Phocyllides, all of whom availed themselves of a form of versification, the original function of which was probably to express mournful sentiments, to inspire their countrymen with their own feelings as to the stirring themes of war and patriotism, of politics, and of love. With Theognis it is clear that the elegy was a song or poem sung at banquets or symposia after the libation, and between the pauses of drinking, to the sound of the flute; and, furthermore, that it was addressed not as elsewhere to the company at large, but to a single guest. Many such elegies were composed by him to friends and boon-companions, as may be inferred from his remains, and from the tradition which survives, that he wrote an elegy to the Sicilian Megarians on their escape from the siege of their city by Gelon (483 B.C.); but owing to the partiality of a later age for the maxims and moral sentiments with which these elegies were interspersed, and which, as we learn from Xenophon and Isocrates, were used in their day for educational purposes, the shape in which the poetry of Theognis has come down to us is not such as to give it the form and drift as a handbook of maxims from Shakespeare is unlike an undoctored and un-Bowdlerised play. Thanks to the German editor Welcker, and to

the ingenious "restoration" of Hookham Frere, the original type of these poems has been approximately realised, and we are able, in a great measure, to connect the assorted links into a consistent and personal autobiography. For the clearer apprehension of this it seems best to give a very brief sketch of the political condition of the poetry, and then to divide our notice of himself and his works into three epochs, defined and marked out by circumstances which gravely influenced his career and tone of thought.

The poet's fatherland, the Grecian, not Sicilian, Megara, after asserting its independence of Corinth, of which it had been a colony, fell under the sway of a Doric nobility, which ruled it in right of descent and of landed estates. But before the legislation of Solon, Theagenes, the father-in-law of Gelon, had become tyrant or despot of Megara, like Cypselus and Periander at Corinth, by feigned adoption of the popular cause. His ascendancy was about B.C. 630-600, and upon his overthrow the aristocratic oligarchy again got the upper hand for a brief space, until the commons rose against them, and succeeded in establishing a democracy of such anarchical liberty and disorder that it was not long ere the expelled nobles were reinstated. The elegies of Theognis, who was born about 570 B.C., date from about the beginning of the Doric domination, as he belonged to the aristocratic party, and the spoliation of their temples and dwellings by the poor, who no longer paid the interest of their debts. Frequent reference will be found in

his poetry to violent democratic measures, such as the adoption of the political rights, into the sovereign community; and, as might be imagined, in the case of one who was of the best blood and oldest stock, he constantly uses the term "the good" as a synonym for "the nobles," whilst the "bad and base" is his habitual expression to denote "the commonalty." In his point of view nothing brave and honourable was to be looked for from the latter, whilst nothing that was not so could possibly attach to the former. This distinction is a key to the due interpretation of his more political poems, and it accounts for much that strikes the reader as a hurtful and inexpedient prejudice on the part of the poet. For some time he would appear to have striven to preserve a neutrality, for which, as was to be expected, he got no credit from either side; but at last, whilst he was absent on a sea voyage, the "bad rich" resorted to a confiscation of his ancestral property, with an eye to redistribution among the commons. From this time forward he is engaged in constant communications with Cynus, a young noble, who was evidently looked to as the coming man and saviour of his party; but the conspiracy, long in brewing, seems only to have come to a head to be summarily crushed, and the result is that Theognis has to retire into exile in Eubœa, Thebes, and Syracuse in succession. How he behaved in these places of refuge, turning his talents to account, and holding pretty staunchly to his principles, until a seasonable aid to the popular cause at the last-named sojourn, and a still more

seasonable *douceur* to the Corinthian general, paved the way to his recall to Megara, will be seen in the account we propose to give of the last epoch of his life, which is supposed to have lasted till beyond 480 B.C., as he distinctly in two places refers to the instant terror of a Median invasion. That life divides itself into the periods of his youth and prosperous estate, his clouded fortunes at home, and his long and wearisome exile. The remainder of this chapter will serve for a glance at the first period.

That our poet was of noble birth may be inferred from the confidence with which, in reply to an indignity put upon him in his exile at Thebes, to which we shall refer in due course, he asserts his descent from "noble Æthon," as if the very mention of the name would prove his rank to his adversaries; and in the first fragment (according to the ingenious chronological arrangement of Frère, which we follow throughout), Theognis is found in the heyday of prosperity, praying Zeus, and Apollo, the special patron of his fatherland, to preserve his youth

"Free from all evil, happy with his wealth,  
In joyous easy years of peace and health."

Interpreting this language by its context, we learn that his ideal of joyous years was to frequent the banquets of his own class, and take his part in songs accompanied by the flute or lyre,—

"To revel with the pipe, to chant and sing—  
To drink and feast, and dance and sing—  
To revel with the pipe, to chant and sing—  
For reputation or for property?"—(F.)

But we are not to suppose that his language as the poet was so much the expression of his serious moods as of a gaiety rendered reckless by potations such as, we are obliged to confess, lent a not infrequent inspiration to his poetry. Theognis is, according to his own theory, quite *en règle* when he retires from a banquet

“Not absolutely drunk nor sober quite.”

He glories in a state which he expresses by a Greek word, which seems to mean that of being fortified or steeled with wine, and which he resorts to against the cares of life to which he saw no shame in resorting. And perhaps too implicit credence is not to be given to the professions of indifference to wealth and character which are made by a poet who can realise in verse such an experience as is portrayed in the fragment we are about to cite:—

“My brain grows dizzy, whirled and overthrown  
With wine: my senses reel beneath my own.  
The ceiling and the walls are wheeling round! \*  
But let me try! perhaps my feet are sound.  
Let me retire with my remaining sense,  
To the soft bosom of my love.”—(F.)

In his more sober moments the poet could appreciate

\* Juvenal, in Satire vi. 477-479, describes drinking-bouts in imperial Rome prolonged—



pursuits :—congenial to his vocation and intellectual cultivation, as is seen in his apparently early thirst for knowledge, and discovery that such thirst does not admit of thorough satisfaction :—

“Inadequate to satisfy the mind—  
A craving eagerness remains behind ;  
And something more we cannot rest,  
Something unknown, or something unpossessed.”—(F.)

One who could be supposed to have laid up in youth a store of the best of his own genius ; and the bent of his talents, which was towards vocal and instrumental music and composition of elegies, was so successful that in time of need he was able to turn it to means of subsistence. Indeed, that he knew what was really the real secret of success in a concert or a feast is seen in a remark which he addressed to a certain Simonides (whom there is no reason to identify with the famous poet), recommending

“Such entertainments give the truest pleasure.”—(F.)

But if the poet was able to preserve the health which he besought the gods to guard him, in order that what we should call hard living might be his poetry that the “peace” would be his, it did not bless him uninterruptedly. In one of his earlier elegiac fragments there is a hint of a youthful passion,

broken off by him in bitterness at the Megarian flirt's "love for every one." Such, at least, seems to be the interpretation of four lines which may be closely rendered,—

"While only I quaffed yonder secret spring,  
'Twas clear and sweet to my imagining.  
'Tis turbid now. Of it no more I drink,  
But hang o'er other stream or river-brink."—(D.)

He was determined, it seems, to be more discursive in his admiration for the future. How that plan succeeded does not appear, though in several passages he arrogates to himself a degree of experience as regards women, and match-making, and the like. In the end we have his word for it, that he proved his own maxim,—

"On things that bring in women folk,  
Nothing can equal a wife in a wife."—(F.)

But this could not have been till long after he had suffered rejection of his suit for a damsel whose parents preferred a worse man—*i.e.*, a plebeian—and had carried on secret relations with her after her "mating to a clown." His own account of this is curious, as its opening shows that he vented his chagrin on himself:—

"Wine I forswear, since at my darling's side  
A meaner man has bought the right to bide.  
Poor cheer for me! To sate her parents' thirst  
She seeks the well, and sure her heart will burst  
In weeping for my love and lot accurst.  
I meet her, cheep'ring round, her lips I kiss,  
And they responsive gently murmur this:

'A fair but luckless girl, my lot has been  
To wed perforce the meanest of the mean.  
Oft have I longed to burst the reins, and flee  
From hateful yoke to freedom, love, and thee."

Perhaps, on the whole, he had no great reason to speak well of the sex, for in one place, as if he looked upon marriage, like friendship, as a *business*, he has come to the effect—

"That men's and women's hearts you cannot try  
Before the altar, where you sell the which you buy;  
Nor human wit and wisdom, when you treat  
For such a pair the *business* of the day:  
Fancy is the game, and *business* the play."—(F.)

But, if his witness is true, mercenary parents were as common of old as in our own day. He was led, both by his exclusiveness as an aristocrat, and his impatience of a mere money-market of worth, to a disgust of—

"The daily marriages we make,  
Where price is every thing: for men are sold;  
Men marry; women are in marriage given.  
The couple so united grow like *the* thriven  
May be the offspring with the proudest race;  
Thus everything is mixt, noble and base!"—(F.)

And that he did ponder the regeneration of society, and strive to fathom the depths of the education question agitated in the old world, we know from a passage in his elegies, which, though we have no clue to the time he wrote it, deserves to be given in this place, both as connected with his notions about birth, and as



Bring with a rounded arm and graceful air }  
 Water to wash, and garlands for our hair : }  
 In spite of all the systems and the rules  
 Invented and observed by sickly fools,  
 Let us be brave, and resolutely drink ;  
 Not minding if the Dog-star rise or sink."—(F.)

A very pretty vignette might be made of this, or of a kindred fragment that seems to belong to his later days. And to tell the truth, the poet's rule seems to have been that you should "live while you may." Whether, as has been surmised by Mr Frere, he refers to the catastrophe of *Phrygia* or not, the four lines which follow indicate Theognis's conviction that everything is fated,—a conviction very conducive to contentment at any given hour. 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die':—

"No costly sacrifice nor offerings given  
 Can cheer the departed spirit of the dead ;  
 We must eat and drink, and be merry,  
 O that we could but see the day of death!"—(F.)

This conviction, no doubt, to a great degree influenced the poet's indifference to the honours of a pompous funeral, for which, considering his birth and traditions, he might have cherished a weakness. But his tone of mind, we see, was such that he could anticipate no satisfaction from "hat-bands and scarves," or whatever else in his day represented handsome obsequies. When some great chief, perhaps a tyrant, perhaps one of the great chiefs of his party at Megara, was to be borne to his long home with a solemn pageant, Theognis has

no mind to take a part in it, and expresses his reasons in language wherein the Epicurean vein is no less conspicuous than the touching common-sense :—

“I envy not these sumptuous obsequies,  
The stately car, the purple canopies ;  
Much better please I am I, mourning here,  
With simpler equipage, and better cheer.  
A couch of thorns, or an embroidered bed,  
Are matters of indifference to the dead.”—(F.)

This old-world expression of the common-place that the grave levels all distinctions is not unlike, save that it lacks the similitude of life to a river, the stanzas on “Man’s Life,” by a Spanish poet, Don Jorge Manrique, translated by Longfellow :—

“Our lives are rivers, gliding down  
To that unfathomed boundless sea,  
The silent grave !  
Thither all earthy pomp and boast  
Roll to be swallowed up and lost  
In one dark wave.  
Thither the mighty torrents hurry ;  
Thither the brook pursues its way ;  
And tinkling rill.  
There all are equal : side by side,  
The poor man and the son of pride  
Lie down to rest.”

But before Theognis could give proof of this levelling change, he had a stormy career to fulfil, as we shall find in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

### THEOGNIS IN OPPOSITION.

FROM the indistinctness of our knowledge as to the sequence of events in Megara, it is impossible to fix the point of time when Theognis began to be a political plotter; but as, during the whole of his mature life, his party was in opposition, it will be enough to trace the adverse influence of the dominant democracy upon his career till it terminated in exile. We have seen that he was a member of a club composed of exclusive and aristocratic members, meeting ostensibly for feasting and good-fellowship, but really, as their designation "the good"—in a sense already explained—clearly indicated, designed and pledged to cherish the traditions of a constitution to which they were devoted, and which for the time being was suffering eclipse.

Of this club a certain Simonides was president, one Onomacritus a boon-companion, and Cynrus, to whom are attributed some two-thirds of the extant verses of Theognis, a younger member, of whom, politically, the greatest thing was expected. Though its soirees seem

to have been often noisy and Bacchanalian, we must suppose the Aristocratic Club at Megara to have been as busy in contemporary politics as the "Carlton" or the "Reform" in our general elections; and there are tokens that Theognis was a sleepless member of the Club: he is a political enthusiast, of whom little more than the names survive, cared more for club-life than club-politics. There was one notable exception. In spite of the waywardness of youth, and the fickleness characteristic of one so petted and caressed by his friends, Cynos must have lent his ears and hands to various schemes of Theognis for upholding the aristocracy, and maintaining the ascendancy of the "wise and good." At times it is plain that Cynos considered himself to have a ground of offence against Theognis; and there are verses of the latter which bespeak recrimination and open rupture, though of course the poet compares himself to unalloyed gold, and considers his good faith stainless. The elder of the pair was probably tetchy and jealous, the younger changeable and volatile; but there is certainly no reason for supposing that Cynos's transference of his friendship to some other political chief resulted in either party-success or increase of personal distinction, for his name survives only in the elegiacs of Theognis, as indeed that poet has prophesied it would, in a fragment the key to which Hookham Frere finds in a comparison of bardic celebration with the glory resulting from an Olympic victory:—

"You soar aloft, and over land and wave  
Are borne triumphant on the wings I gave,



(The swift and mighty wings, Music and Verse).  
 Your name in easy numbers smooth and terse  
 Is wafted o'er the world; and heard among  
 The banquetings of the gods on high;  
 Heard and admired: the modulated air  
 Of flutes, and voices of the Muses, shall  
 Recite it, and to future times shall tell;  
 When, closed within the dark sepulchral cell,  
 Your form shall moulder, and your empty ghost  
 Wander along the dreary Stygian coast.

Yet shall your memory flourish green and young,  
 Recorded and revived on every tongue,  
 In continents and islands, every place  
 That owns the language of the Grecian race.

No part of the progress of a nation's mind,  
 But is recorded in the history of the land,  
 No part of the progress of a nation's mind,  
 But is recorded in the history of the land,  
 A mighty power, and immortal fame,  
 Fixed as the earth, immortal as the sun."—(F.)

But, to catch the thread of Theognis's story, we must go back to earlier verses than these, addressed to the young noble whom he regarded with a pure and almost paternal regard—the growth, it may be, in the first instance of kindred political views. The verses of Theognis which refer to the second period of his life begin with a caution to Cyrnus to keep his strains as much a secret as the fame of his poetry will allow, and evince the same sensitiveness to public opinion as so many other of his remains. He cannot gain and keep, he regrets to own, the goodwill of his fellow-citizens, any more than Zeus can please all parties, whilst—

"Some call for rainy weather, some for dry."

What the advice was which required such a seal of secrecy begins to appear shortly, in a fragment which presages a revolution, in which Cyrnus is looked-to to play a leader's part. It is interesting as a picture of the state of things which one revolution had brought about, and for which Theognis was hatching a panacea in another. Slightly altered, to meet the political sense of the "good" and "bad," the "bettermost" and the "worse" in Megarian politics, the following passage from *Mc Pherson's edition* is given:—

"Our commonwealth preserves its former frame,  
Our common people are no more the same ;  
They that in skins and hides were rudely dressed,  
Nor dreamed of law, nor sought to be redressed  
By rules of right, but, in the days of old,  
*Without the walls, like deer, their place did hold,*  
Are now *the dominant class*, and we, the rest,  
Their betters nominally, once the best,  
Degenerate, debased, timid, and mean ;  
Who can endure to witness such a scene ?  
Their easy courtesies, the ready smile  
Prompt to deride, to flatter, to beguile !  
Their utter disregard of right or wrong,  
Of truth or honour ! — Ours of such a thing  
Never imagine you can choose a just  
Or any wisdom, or fidelity to trust.

But change your habits ! let them go their way !  
Adopt with every man the style and tone,  
Most common to the people with his own !  
But in your secret counsels keep aloof  
From feeble paltry souls, that at the proof

Of danger and distress are sure to fail,  
 "The world is full of sorrow and travail."—(F.)

The last lines assuredly betoken the brewing of a conspiracy; but the poet goes on to lament a state of things where a generation of spiritless nobles replaces an ancestry remarkable for spirit and magnanimity. Though a government by an aristocracy of caste, if of this latter calibre, could not be upset, he has evident misgivings in reference to the present leaders of the party, whose pride and ambition have ruined the centaurs, destroyed "Smyrna the rich and Colophon the great," and made "Magnesian ills"—in reference to the punishment of the oppressive pride of the Magnesians by the Ephesians at the river Mæander—a by-word and a proverb in the verse of Archilochus, as well as of Theognis. In such a posture of affairs our poet professes an intention to hold aloof from pronounced politics and party—

"Not laughing with the Athenians below  
 Nor with the proud and arbitrary laws:"—(F.)

just as elsewhere he advises Cynrus to do, in a couplet which may be translated—

"Fret not, if strife the townsmen reckless make,  
 But 'twixt both sides, as I, the mid-way take."—(D.)

He was old enough to foresee the danger of reprisals, and, from policy, counselled younger blood to abstain from injustice and rapine, when the tide turned,—

"Cynrus, proceed like me! walk not awry!  
 Nor trample on the bounds of property."—(F.)

but he soon found that his neutrality only procured him the hatred and abuse of both friends and foes ; a discovery which he expressed thus :—

“The city’s mind I cannot comprehend—  
Do well or ill, they let me live as I please ;  
From base and noble blame is still my fate,  
Though fools may blame, who cannot imitate.”—(D.)

It was hard, he thought, that his friends should look coolly upon him, if, with a view to the wellbeing of his party, he gave no offence to the opposite faction,—if, as he puts it,

“I keep my foe’s path, but keep as clear,  
As of hid rocks at sea the pilots steer.”—(D.)

And he is almost querulous in his susceptibility of public opinion, with a few stings,—

“The good and brave in common fame  
From time to time encounter praise or blame :  
The vulgar pass unheeded : none escape  
Scandal or insult in some form or shape.  
Most fortunate are those, alive or dead,  
Of whom the least is thought, the least is said.”—(F.)

It is as if he administered to himself the comfort which Adam gives Orlando—

“Know you not, master, to some kind of men  
There are more enemies than to the good ?  
No more do yours ; your virtues, gentle master,  
Attracting and betraying traitors to you.”  
—‘As you like it,’ II. iii.

But a candid study of the character of Theognis induces the impression that his neutrality was only fit-

ful or temporary. A great deal of his counsel to his friend exhibits him in the light of a politic watcher of events, at one time deprecating what at another he advocated. Who would have thought the champion of the "wise and good" and of their policy, pure and simple, in these verses, breathing a spirit of progress and expediency?—

"When you are called to struggle not, my friend,  
Idle and old abuses to defend.

"The friends of the 'wise and good' are not to be  
The friends of the 'wise and good' are not to be"—(F.)

There is also an inconsistency to be accounted for on the moral grounds, in the discrepant advice which he gives Cynrus as to the friend to be chosen in the crisis then imminent. At one time he is all for "the friends of the 'wise and good,'" and at another for association with reckless associates, as well as with fair-weather friends :—

"Never engage with a poltroon or craven,  
Avoid him, Cynrus, as a treacherous haven.  
Those friends and hearty comrades, as you think,  
Ready to join you, when you feast or drink,  
Those easy friends from difficulty shrink."—(F.)

But anon he is found subscribing to the principle that "no man is wholly bad or wholly good," and recommending his friend to conciliate, as we say, Tom, Dick, and Harry, so as to be "all things to all men."

"And if the world is full of evil and sin,  
His only plan, to be all things to all men."

Strive to avoid offence, study to please  
 The model for a statesman such as you.”—(F.)

Perhaps the clue to this riddle is, that circumstances : a more pronounced course,—as men get desperate when they lose those possessions which, whilst intact, justify them in being choice, and conservative, and exclusive. Either in a fresh political revolution and a new partition of the lands of the republic, or, as Mr Grote thinks, in a movement in favour of a single-headed despot accomplished by some of Theognis's party, who were sick of the rule of the “bad rich,” he lost his estate whilst absent on an unfortunate voyage. Thenceforth he is a conspirator at work to recover his confiscated lands by a counter-revolution : thenceforth his verses are a mixture of schemes for revenge, of murmurs against Providence, and of suspicion of the comrades whose partisanship he hoped might yet reinstate the old possessors of property. The two or three fragments which refer more or less directly to this loss may be given together. Here is one which speaks to the extent and nature of it :—

“Bad faith has ruined me : distrust alone  
 Has saved a remnant : all the rest is gone

\* The creature referred to is the Sea-Polypus — *Sepia Octopodia* of Linnæus—which is referred to in Hesiod's ‘Works and Days’ (524) under the epithet of “the boneless.”

To ruin and the dogs: the powers divine  
 I . . . . .  
 Mere human violence, rapine, and stealth  
 . . . . .—(F.)

In another he invokes the help of Zeus . . . .  
 his friends and foes according to their deserts, whilst  
 he describes himself as one who—

“Like to a scared and hunted hound  
 . . . . . and half drowned,  
 . . . . . wintry rain,  
 . . . . .”—(F.)

The bitterness of his . . . . . the wrong he has  
 suffered is intensified, in the sequel of this fragment,  
 into the expression of a wish “one day to drink the  
 very blood” of them that have done it. But perhaps  
 the most touching and specific allusion to his spolia-  
 tion is where the return of spring—to send another’s  
 plough over his ancestral fields—brings up to his  
 mind the . . . . . in his fatherland—

“Disparely harrowed of the oxen’s teeth  
 That were to till the plough of my fatherland,  
 Strikes to my heart a melancholy strain—  
 When all is lost, and my paternal lands  
 Are tilled for other lords with other hands,  
 Since that disastrous wretched voyage brought  
 Riches and lands and everything to nought.”—(F.)

A kindred feeling of pain breathes in another passage  
*à propos* of autumn and its harvest-homes. And this  
 pain he seeks to allay sometimes by reminding himself  
 that womanish repinings will but gratify his foes, and

at other times by plans for setting Providence to rights. Now he admits that patience is the only cure, and that, if impatient,—

“We strive like children, and the Almighty plan  
Controls the froward, weak children of man.”

Now again, he seems to think sullen resistance is a better policy; and here, too, he argues against the justice of visiting the sins of the fathers on the children:—

“The case is hard where  
A person of an honourable mind,  
Is doomed to pay the lamentable score  
Quite undeservedly doomed to atone,  
In other times, for actions not his own.”—(F.)

In the midst of these conflicting emotions it is pleasant to find that he can extend a welcome out of the remnant of his fortunes to such hereditary friends as one Clearistus, who has come across the sea to visit him; and it is consistent with his early habits that he should try the effect of drowning care in the bowl, though he is forced to admit that this factitious oblivion soon gives place to bitter retrospects, and equally bitter prospects.

We must not however suppose that Theognis and his fellow-sufferers brooded altogether passively over their wrongs. It is not the state of a ship in a storm, betray a weakness in the



ruling powers, eminently provocative of the *émeute* or insurrection which was to follow:—

“Such is our state ! in a tempestuous sea,  
 With all the crew raging in mutiny !  
 No duty followed, none to reef a sail,  
 To work the vessel, or to pump or bale :  
 All is abandoned, and without a check  
 The mighty sea comes sweeping o’er the deck.  
 Our steersman, hitherto so bold and steady,  
 Active and able, is deposed already.  
 No discipline, no sense of order felt,  
 The daily masses are unduly dealt.  
 All that is left of order or command  
 Committed wholly to the basest hand.  
 It were no marvel though the vessel sink.  
 But still we hope all will be well !”—(F.)

It is easy to discern in the last couplet a hint to his partisans to take advantage of this posture of affairs, and the fragments which serve as a context revert to the drowning state, discuss who is staunch and what is rotten in it, and imply generally that the sole reason for not striking is distrust of the number and fitness

“The largest company you could enroll,  
 A single vessel could embark the whole !  
 So few there are : the noble ready minds,  
 Faithful and firm, the men that honour binds ;  
 Impregnable to danger and to pain  
 And low seduction in the shape of gain.”—(F.)

But the time comes when such a chosen few have to be resorted to, as a last resource, in preference to the ruin certain to overtake them if, after their plots have been divulged, they sit still and await it. There is extant a passage of some length, which Mr Frere ingeniously conceives to have been the heads of Theognis's poem to the conspirators. Its conclusion represents the oath of the malcontents, a formula pledging assistance to friends and requital to foes to the very uttermost. It breathes the courage of desperation, but does not hold out a prospect of success which could justify the resort to action. The precise nature of what followed we know not. An elegiac and subjective poet like Theognis is readier to moralise than to describe. The outbreak may have had a gleam of success, or may have been crushed at the beginning by the foresight of its opponents, or the despair and faint heart of its promoters. It seems quite clear, however, that, perhaps by the aid of an armed force from some democratic state, most likely Corinth, the insurrection is beaten to its last breathing-place. There is a suggestion which vividly pictures the hurried resolve of the party of Cerynus and Theognis to abandon their country and ill-starred enterprise:—

“A speechless messenger, the beacon's light,  
Announces danger from the mountain's height!  
Bridle your horses and prepare to fly;  
The foe is at the door, the foe is at the height.  
A momentary pause, a narrow space,  
Detains them; but the foes approach apace!

We must abide what fortune has decreed,  
And hope that Heaven will help us at our need.  
Make your resolve ! At home your means were great ;  
Abroad you will retain a poor estate ;  
Yet live secure, at least from present want."—(F.)

Such, then, was the issue of all our poet's plotting and club-intrigues, his poetic exhortations, and his hopes of a saviour in Cynus. Not only did he fail of the aggrandisement of his party and the recovery of his estate : he had henceforth also to realise the miseries of exile.

## CHAPTER III.

### THEOGNIS IN EXILE.

DRIVEN from his country by an unsuccessful rising against the party in power, Theognis next appears as a refugee in Eubœa, where a faction of congenial political enthusiasts had lately appeared. But his sojourn must have been brief. The aristocracy of the island was no match for the commonalty, when the latter was backed by Corinthian sympathisers, whose policy was to upset hereditary oligarchies, and to lift an individual to supreme power on the shoulders of the people. Before this strong and sinister influence our poet probably had to bow in Eubœa, as he had already bowed in Megara. The principles to which he clung so tenaciously were doomed to ill luck, and he felt the disasters of his party little short of a personal disgrace. It was the old story of the *good* and *bad*, in the political and social sense already noticed; and, as at Megara, the good got the worst of it:—

“Alas for our disgrace! Cerinthus lost,\*

The fair Lelantian plain! A *new* *source* *of* *contention* *betwixt* *the* *Ere-*

---

\* *Cerinthus*, a well-watered plain, which was an old source of contention betwixt the Eretrians and Chalcidians.

Invade it—all the *brave* banished or fled !  
 Within the town *lewd ruffians* in their stead  
 Rule it at random. Such is our disgrace.  
 May Zeus confound the Cypselising race !"—(F.)

Breathing from his heart this curse against the policy of the Corinthians above referred to, and conveniently named after the usurper who founded the system, Theognis soon retired to Thebes, as a state which, from its open sympathy with the politics of the banished Megarians, would be likeliest to offer them an asylum, and to connive at their projects for recovering their native city by force or subtlety. The first glimpse we have of him at Thebes is characteristic of the man in more ways than one. At the house of a noble host, his love of music led him to an interference with, or a rivalry of, the hired music-girl Argyris and her vocation, which provoked the gibes of the glee-maiden, and possibly lowered him in the estimation of the company. But the love of music and song, which led him into the . . . . . to furnish him with a ready and extemporised retort to the girl's insinuation that perhaps his mother was a flute-player (and, by implication, a slave)—a retort which he, no doubt, astonished his audience by singing to his own accompaniment :—

"I am not of Thebes. Thebes has given  
 No shelter to my parents, country driven.  
 A trace to jests : my parents mock then not,  
 For mine, not mine, girl, is the slavish lot.  
 Full many an ill the exile has to brave :  
 . . . . ."

Or bought with price. A franchise I retain,  
Albeit in dreamland, and oblivion's plain."—(D.)

The verses seem to be instinct with a *hauriear* bred from *conspicuousness* of his art's estate, and even whilst the singer's dependence upon his own talents rather than on hired minstrelsy bespeaks him a citizen of the world. But, apart from such scenes and such entertainments in hospitable Thebes, our poet found time there for schemes of revenge and reprisals, and for the refugee's proverbial solace, the pleasures of hope. Whilst a portion of his day was spent in the congenial society of the cultivated noble—the *contretemps* at whose house does not seem to have interrupted their friendship—another portion was devoted to projects of return, which a fellow-feeling would prevent from appearing tedious to the ear of his partner in exile, Cyrrus. To him it is amusing to find him comparing his hardships to those of Ulysses, and gathering hope of vengeance from the sequel of the wanderings of that mythical hero:—

“Doomed to descend to Pluto's dreary reign,  
Yet he returned and viewed his home again,  
And wreaked his vengeance on the plundering crew,  
The fellows, laughing scoundrels, whom he slew:  
Whilst all the while, with steady faith unfeigned,  
The prudent, chaste Penelope was pined  
With her fair son, with his father's loss—  
For his arrival and return to power.”—(F.)

According, indeed, to Theognis's testimony, it should seem that his Penelope at Megara was as blameless as

the Ithacan joined him for he takes Cyrrhus to witness, in a quaint fashion enough, that

"Oftentimes I have seen him,  
Nothing can equal goodness in a wife.  
In our country we are all your friends;  
You vouch for me, my friend, and I for you."—(F.)

It must be allowed that this is a confirmation, under the circumstances, of the poet's dictum, "that absence is not death to those that love;" but still one is inclined to wonder what the wives of Megara thought of these restless, revolution-mongering husbands, as they beheld them in the mind's eye hobbing and nobbing over treason in some "Leicester Square" tavern of Eubœa or of Thebes. The goddess of Hope, no doubt, was greatly afflicted by all this; and the sole deity still left to reverence, Hope, became more winsome to his fancy as he dwelt on the refinements he had to forego, now that he was bereft of home and property. The following fragment represents this state of feeling:—

"For human nature Hope remains alone  
Of all the deities—the rest are flown.  
Faith is departed; Truth and Honour dead;  
And all the Graces too, my friend, are fled.  
The scanty specimens of living worth  
Dwindled to nothing and extinct on earth.  
Yet while I live and view the light of heaven  
(Since Hope remains, and never hath been driven  
From the distracted world) the single scope  
Of my devotion is to worship Hope:  
With her I dwell, and with her I shall stay,  
With all the world forsaken away."

Let Hope . . .  
 I . . .

Mr Frere notes the characteristic touch in the fourth line, "The victim of a popular revolution lamenting that democracy has despoiled the Graces." But as time passed, and the exiles still failed to compass their return, distrust and impatience begin to be rife amongst them. Theognis applies the crucible, which frequently figures in his poetry, and might almost indicate a quondam connection with the Melian Melancholia, to discover a stinging truth about himself in the whole range of his friends. In bitterness of spirit he finds out at last that

"An exile has no friends! no partisan  
 Is firm or faithful to the banished man;  
 A . . . punishment  
 Better to . . . than banishment."—(F.)

And under these circumstances he is driven in earnest to the course which, in his 'Acharnians,' Aristophanes represents Dicaeopolis as adopting—namely, private negotiations with the enemies of his country. Ever recurring to his "pleasant gift of verse" when he had "a mot" to deliver, a shaft of wit to barb, or a compliment to pay, Theognis is not without wherewith to pave the way to his reconciliation and restoration. If the whole poems were extant, of which the lines we are about to cite represent Frere's mode of translating the first complete, it would, as the translator acutely surmises, be found to contain a candid review of the past, an admission of errors on his own side, an



advance towards making things pleasant with the other, and a first overture to the treaty he was desirous to negotiate with the victorious party.

"No mean or coward heart will I commend  
 Nor with ungenerous hasty zeal decry  
 A noble-minded gallant enemy."—(F.)

But the bait, though specious, did not tempt those for whom it was designed. In another short fragment is recorded the outburst of the poet's disappointment at finding it "labour lost." He seems to have abandoned hope at last in the words—

"Not to be born—never to see the sun—  
 No worldly blessing is a greater one !  
 And the next best is speedily to die,  
 And lapt beneath a load of earth to lie."—(F.)

But even a man without hope must live—that is, unless he terminate his woes by self-slaughter, a *dernier ressort* to which, to do him justice, Thebes knows no allusion. And so—it would seem because Thebes, though it gave sympathy and hospitality, did not give means of earning a subsistence to the Megarian refugees—we find him in the next fragment—the last of those alluded to by Cyrrus—announcing a resolution to flee from poverty, the worst of miseries :—

"In poverty, dear Cyrrus, we forego  
 Freedom in word and deed—body and mind,  
 Action and thought are fettered and confined.  
 Let us then fly, dear Cyrrus, once again !  
 Wide as the limits of the land and main,

From these entanglements ; with these in view,  
Death is the lighter evil of the two."—(F.)

Possibly, as we hear no more of him, the poet's younger and less ambitious friends did not respond to the invitation. Certainly Theognis shortly transferred his residence to Sicily, that isle of the west, which was to his countrymen what America is to ours, the refuge of unemployed enterprise and unappreciated talent. Arrived there, he quickly shakes off the gloom which the impressions of a sea-voyage would not tend to lighten, and prepares to grapple in earnest the problem "how to manage to live." Though he gives vent to expressions which show what an indignity work must have seemed to

"A manly form, an elevated mind,  
Once elegantly fashioned and refined,"

his intellect and his sense come to his aid, and he concludes with the generalisation that

"All kinds of shabby shifts are understood,  
All kinds of art are practised, bad and good,  
All kinds of ways to gain a livelihood."—(F.)

Not that he descends in his own person to any unworthy art or part. Having satisfied himself that his voice and skill in music were his most marketable gifts, he set up as an assistant performer at musical festivals ; and, in one of his pieces, he apologises for his voice being likely to fail at one of those entertainments, because he had been out late the night before serenading for hire. The poor gentleman no doubt

had to do with work, and to put up with snubs he never dreamed of in his palmy club-life at home. His sensibilities were outraged by vulgar *nouveaux riches* who employed his talent, as well as by professionals who quizzed him as an amateur. Fortunately he could get his revenge in a cheap way upon both classes. Here is his thrust at the former:—

“Dunces are often rich, while indignance  
Thwarts the designs of elegance and sense.  
Nor wealth alone, nor judgment can avail;  
In either case art and improvement fail.”—(F.)

As to the latter, . . . can be more fair and open than the test to which he proposes to submit his own pretensions, and those of one Academus, who had twitted him with being a cross between an artist and an amateur:—

“I am a mule, and you are an ass,  
Which is the better mistrel of the two.  
Then would I show you that a *mule* surpasses  
In his performance all the breed of *asses*.  
Enough of such discourse: now let us try  
To join our best endeavours, you and I,  
With voice and music; since the Muse has blessed  
Us both with her endowments; and possessed  
With the fair science of harmonious sound  
The neighbouring people, and the cities round.”—(F.)

The retort was two-edged. Whilst Theognis turns

the laugh against an ungenerous rival, and this in the spirit of a true gentleman, he finds a sly means of paying a compliment to the taste of the public, upon whose appreciation of music he had to depend for support. It is plain that he gauged that public accurately. By degrees it becomes evident that he is getting on in his chosen profession—not indeed to the extent of being able, as he puts it in a terse couplet, “to indulge his spirit to the full in its taste for the graceful and beautiful,” but, at all events, of having wherewithal to discourse ably on the question of indulgence and economy, from which we infer that he had made something to save or to lose. After weighing the *pros* and *cons* in a more than usually didactic passage, he confides to his hearers and readers the reason why he inclines to a moderate rather than a reckless expenditure:—

“For something should be left when life is fled  
 To cheer the memory of the dead;  
 Those easy tears, those fond regrets  
 Of kindly recollection and regret.  
 Better a little left when life is fled  
 Is a sure profit, never wholly lost;  
 Not altogether lost, though left behind,  
 Bequeathed in kindness to a friendly mind.  
 And for the present, can a lot be found  
 For small happiness than a moderate reward,  
 And easy competence, with honour crowned;  
 The good approval of the good and wise,  
 The gentle smiles, the friendly courtesies;  
 Which are the truest pleasures of the soul.”

With honour and pre-eminence of place,  
Coverts, elders, and the rising race?"—(F.)

With these laudable ambitions he pursued with profit his calling of "director of choral entertainments," until, it would seem, upon the incidence of a war between Hippocrates, the tyrant of Gela, and the Syracusans, he was induced to go out in the novel character of a champion of freedom to the battle of Helorus. When Corinth and Corcyra combined to deliver Syracuse from the siege which followed the loss of this battle, it is probable that the Corinthian deputies were surprised to find the poet, whom they had known as an oligarchist at Megara, transformed into a very passable democrat, and seeking their good offices, with regard to his restoration to his native city. These, however, he found could not be obtained through a bribe; and accordingly, whilst he no doubt complied with the terms, he could not resist giving vent to his disgust in a poem wherein the Corinthian commander is likened to Sisyphus, and which ends with the bitter words—

"Fame is a jest; for what is it worth;  
No power on earth is like the power of gold."—(F.)

It should seem that the bribe did pass, and that while the negotiations consequent upon it were pending, Theognis drew so near his home as friendly Lacedæmon, where he composed a pretty and Epicurean strain that tells its own story:—

"Enjoy your time, my soul ! another race  
 Will shortly fill the world, and take your place,  
 With their own hopes and fears, sorrow and mirth :  
 I shall be dust the while and crumbled earth.  
 But think not of it ! Drink the racy wine  
 Of rich Taygetus, press'd from the vine  
 Which Theotimus, in the sunny glen  
 (Old Theotimus loved by gods and men),  
 Planted and watered from a plenteous source,  
 Teaching the vintage to the peasant :  
 Drink it, and cheer your heart, and banish care :  
 A *load* of wine will *lighten* your despair."—(F.)

When in the concluding fragments (we follow Mr Hookham Frere's arrangement here as in most instances) Theognis is found reinstated in his native country, the sting of politics has been evidently extracted, as a preliminary ; and the burden of his song thenceforth is the praise of wine and of banquets. These are his recipes, we learn in a fragment which contributes to the ascertainment of his date, for driving far

"All fears of Persia, and her threatened war,"—

an impending danger, to which he recurs vaguely in another fragment. It has been surmised from his speaking of age and death as remote, and of convivial pleasures as a refuge from the fear of these, that he was not of very advanced age at the battle of Marathon. It is to be hoped that, when restored to home after his long exile, his wife was alive to receive him with warmer welcome than his children, to whom

Probably they had been estranged from him during his absence by the influence of the party in power, and they may also have been ill pleased at his devotion to the artistic pursuits which ministered to his substance in exile and loss of fortune. To the end of his days, wonderful it should seem and undisturbed thenceforward, he fulfilled his destiny as a "servant of the Muses," recognising it as a duty to spread the fruit of his poetic genius, rather than, as in his earlier years, to limit it to his inner circle of friends and admirers:—

"Not in secret, like a miser with his pelf."

(F.)

It would be unhandsome in us to take leave of Theognis without a word of felicitation to the poet's shade on the happy lot which he has met with at the hands of modern scholars. Time was—a time not so very long ago—when the comparatively few who were acquainted with the poet's work saw in him simply a stringer together of maxims in elegiac verse, such as Xenophon had accounted him; and Isocrates had set him down in the same category with Hesiod and Phocylides. But, thanks to the Germans, Wolf, Lenz, and others, the poet's reputation has been proved to be a good deal more than a string of maxims. John Hookham Frere, the elegiac poet of Megara, has been proved to be a poet of no small power, and his work has been shown to be a valuable contribution to the history of the Greek language and literature.

which are not hard to gather up. The result is, not that his maxims are less notable, but that we realise the life and character of him who moulded them into verse—verse which is often elegant in expression, and always marked by a genuine and forcible subjectivity. The task of tracing this life in his works has been rendered easier to the author of the foregoing pages by the ingenious and skilful labours of Mr Frere.

END OF HESIOD AND THEOGNIS.



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